

Headlines:

- **Nuclear Powers Release Statement on Nuclear Weapons**
- **Protests in Egypt**
- **Americans Worried About Democracy**

Details:

Nuclear Powers Release Statement on Nuclear Weapons

On Monday 3rd January, the leaders of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council — the US, Russia, China, Britain, and France — released a joint statement that said a nuclear war must never be fought. The five powers said the “avoidance of war between Nuclear-Weapon States and the reduction of strategic risks as our foremost responsibilities.” “We affirm that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. As nuclear use would have far-reaching consequences, we also affirm that nuclear weapons — for as long as they continue to exist — should serve defensive purposes, deter aggression, and prevent war,” the statement said. The statement said the “spread of such weapons must be prevented” and that the powers were committed to obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The past few years have not been good for arms control. Since the US withdrew from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty, there is currently only one major piece of arms control between the US and Russia, known as the New START. The US and Russia are expected to discuss arms control during planned security talks on January 10th. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), said the words of the five countries do not match their actions. "They write this 'nice' statement but doing exactly the opposite in reality. They're in a nuclear arms race, expanding nuclear arsenals, spending billions on modernizing and constantly prepared to start a nuclear war," Fihn said in a statement posted on social media.

Protests in Egypt

Protesters demanded their delayed salaries and promotions in Egypt's state television building in Cairo in an apparently spontaneous demonstration, on Jan 3rd. The demonstrations could indicate that popular economic discontent is rising. With the anniversary of the Tahrir Square protest anniversary a few weeks away, the social economic situation is rock bottom in Egypt. The military regime has used laws passed after the 2014 demonstrations that give penalties for unauthorized gatherings that can range from prison sentences to terrorism charges. The situation of most of Egyptian society remains precarious with many struggling to make ends meet due to economic mismanagement for a decade. It remains to be seen if these protests were an isolated event or the beginning of something bigger. Egypt's macroeconomic situation has improved substantially in recent years, but the situation for average citizens remains precarious amid rising inflation and stagnant wages.

Americans Worried about Democracy

A shocking 83% of registered American voters are at least somewhat worried about the future of democracy in the country, according to a new poll conducted on the eve of the anniversary of last year's Capitol riot. The vast majority of Americans of all political persuasions are very or somewhat worried about the future of democracy in the country, according to a [survey](#) published Tuesday, 4th Jan, by USA Today and Suffolk University. Political outlook did predict Americans' viewpoints on how democracy had evolved during that four-year period, but even the majority of liberal respondents (62%) agreed it had weakened, along with 84% of their conservative counterparts. The poll's results were even more alarming than those from an NPR/Ipsos poll, which found 64% of Americans believed US democracy was in crisis and at risk of failing.