

# Sharm el-Sheikh summit no opportunity for Iran: **Expert**

## Iran must push diplomacy 'to its highest level'



By Hossein Alaei  
Former IRGC Navy  
commander

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*Hossein Alaei, a former IRGC Navy commander and a faculty member at Imam Hossein University, spoke at a seminar on the implementation of the snapback mechanism held at the Center for Middle East Strategic Studies, where he spelled out the United States' policy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran and laid bare the mixed signals coming from Donald Trump, the country's president. A selected part of Alaei's address at the seminar is as follows:*

### Iran's drive for dialogue half the journey

We have never been after conflict or war. The aim of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to sort out issues through dialogue. Still, one must face the fact that talks only work out when both sides are on board. Our one-sided effort is only half the journey. Trump's conduct in meetings, in New York and at this Sharm el-Sheikh summit, is straight out of a royal playbook. The photos and videos released of his gatherings in New York and his latest function at Sharm el-Sheikh make it clear that he still acts with that royal mindset.

In such circumstances, why should our president even show up? Show up just to be humiliated and sent back? Was this ever really an opportunity for Iran? This game was set up to humiliate Iran — just to claim that they'd dragged Iran to the table.

### US, Israel believe force can settle most issues

Let me spell out a strategy for you: What is the overall strategy of America and Israel, really? If we lose sight of this, we're likely to make mistakes. Instead of being surprised at America and Israel and questioning, "Why do you act this way? Why are you warmongers? Why do you always go around killing nations? Why did you kill 70 thousand people

in Gaza and bury 10 thousand under rubble? Why do you do these things?" — we'll be better off just looking inward at ourselves and our officials.

So, what is America and Israel's strategy? America and Israel believe anything that can be sorted out by force shouldn't be handled by negotiation. They could have sorted out a cease-fire in Gaza two years ago or handled the Gaza issue through talks — so why didn't they? Because their mantra is: "We have weaponry, power, and resources so we can wipe out the other side," and nobody calls them out. They flattened all of Gaza, forced its people to flee, cut off food and water, and killed many. Trump even showed up proudly and kept quiet about the massacre in Gaza. He boasts instead that he freed several captives. If Netanyahu wanted to get his captives back, he could have worked out a deal last year. Hamas had said it was up for a deal, but for the other side, as long as war is ongoing and working in their favor, they feel they must keep at it.

They kept pushing on until they realized that if they went further, even the last living captive would end up dead. Hamas didn't kill any captives; All those who died were killed in Israeli bombing runs.

Meanwhile, the Israelis wanted to force 2.3 million people out of

Gaza. These people were either killed or forced to suffer hunger and thirst, never given a secure haven — yet they held out in their own land.

Didn't Trump, at the start of his presidency (early 2025), float the idea of turning Gaza into a giant casino and beach resort, and shipping its people off to other countries? Did he not make such claims? These weren't offhand remarks. Every statement from Trump and Netanyahu came with an execution plan, with military operations in the pipeline. The most militarized governments on earth are America and Israel, and Israel sees itself as a full-blown military camp — with no mission but military operations.

But when they saw brute force didn't pan out, they eventually called a cease-fire. Do you think Israel would have called off the 12-day war if they'd thought victory was within reach? Of course not. Israel ended the war with Iran because a missile struck right in the heart of Tel Aviv, and the public's support for the Resistance held Israel back. We pray that there is no war.

Didn't Mr. Pezeshkian say from the outset that bilateral problems should be resolved? Why didn't the other side step up to solve things — instead of brandishing their swords? The incumbent Iranian government truly want-

ed to fix things, having put in the work. Talks were ongoing, but these behaviors kept carrying on regardless.

### War must not be allowed to break out

Every issue has two sides, each important. If we fail to get to know the other party, we only end up doubting ourselves: "We want, but they don't." During the 12-day war, on the second day, Trump demanded unconditional surrender — meaning, "Just give up and leave, and we'd take over." They even tried to saddle the son of the deposed Shah and wanted to fly him into Iran from Paris in the style of Imam Khomeini. They thought whoever flies in from Paris would get a red carpet rolled out. But for Iranians, anyone cozying up to Israel should be thrown out like a filthy rag. They still haven't backed down from this attitude. So, we must hold onto our strength, and America is out to undermine our power — and not just our military might. We have to engage with the world and put diplomacy into play at the highest level, seizing every opportunity and pulling out all the stops so that they don't get the chance to drag us into war. They want to fight; We must not let war break out. These steps must be taken; The public must be kept content.



A municipal worker hoists a US flag next to those of other countries near Sharm el-Sheikh International Airport ahead of the arrival of world leaders for a "peace summit," in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on October 11, 2025.  
● KHALED DESOUKI/AFP



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US President Donald Trump (2nd-R) cuts short a conversation with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian (2nd-L) at a summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on October 13, 2025.  
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### We must keep building power across all sectors

We weren't out to trigger the snapback; Rather, Trump was after implementing it since his first term. Even back then, he went to the United Nations to push for snapback, but came up short. Now he's in power, and some world leaders are acting like court jesters and nominating him as a Nobel Peace Prize candidate. What went on at Sharm el-Sheikh was truly ridiculous. Trump behaved just like a king there.

We must build power in every field and also deter Israel and America from going to war. That's possible only if our words go after these global criminals — not ourselves — holding sway over humanity. We aren't seeking war — they are.

In my view, building power and deterring Israel and America are the two ways out of crisis, and we can succeed down this path — I am certain of what I say. During the war with Saddam, in the first week, he wanted to finish things quickly. Do you think Saddam went to war just to lose? He waged war to seize Khuzestan and our islands, and tear up the 1975 treaty. Trump and Israel also declared a cease-fire in the 12-day war because the public wouldn't let them come out on top.

### Why some only count Israelis as human?

We must show them that this path gets them nowhere. The other side should sit down at the negotiating table, engage with Iran, and steer clear of war. Let's change approaches and policies toward every nation, especially towards Iran. Let the Palestinian state come into existence and the people there live like everyone else.

Why should only Israelis, in your view, be seen as human and given carte blanche, while Palestinians are denied the right to govern or even exist outside total blockade? Before Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, did Gazans have any real lives? Gaza was like an open-air prison. Even by Western accounts, its people were living under siege. Let humanity live and take charge of its own destiny.

The full article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

