A Symbolic Day in Sharm el-Sheikh

The international peace summit convening today in Sharm el-Sheikh marks the first such gathering in two decades bringing together representatives of Israel, Palestine, the United States, key Arab states, and selected international partners. After two years of war in Gaza that claimed more than 60,000 lives, the world is, for the first time, attempting not to issue declarations – but to reach a real settlement.

This morning, during President Donald Trump's visit to Jerusalem, he spoke by phone with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Whether Israel's Prime Minister will attend the summit in person remains unclear. U.S. and Egyptian sources speak of an "open-ended formula," while Israeli outlets report that the foreign minister or national security adviser may lead the delegation. In a region where symbolism is strategy, even the form of participation becomes a tool of negotiation.

Co-hosted by Presidents Trump and el-Sisi, the summit reflects a decisive break from the UN's ritual diplomacy. This is not another declaratory conference, but a forum for leaders capable of taking decisions. Where Brussels and New York rely on process, Washington and Cairo pursue outcomes. Sharm el-Sheikh thus becomes not just a venue for Middle Eastern talks – but a symbol of a broader return to decision-based geopolitics.

A New Global Alignment – The World of States That Act

The guest list itself outlines a new order of power.

- **Architect of the framework:** The United States. President Trump's administration designed and imposed the negotiation format. Washington acts not as a mediator but as a builder of the deal – where peace is the result of leadership and responsibility.
- **Active guarantors:** Regional powers – Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, the UAE, Turkey, Palestine, and, depending on representation, Israel. They are not here to debate but to implement.
- **Observers and donors:** Europe's major states and invited partners – France, Germany, Italy, the UK, Greece, Cyprus, Norway, Hungary, India, and Canada – provide political endorsement but no leverage. Their presence is symbolic – witnesses to the process, not its authors.

Poland is absent from this list. The inclusion of Hungary and Norway underlines that

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in today's diplomacy, loyalty is not enough – initiative matters. Budapest acts while Warsaw comments. In the transactional logic of Trump and el-Sisi, contribution outweighs correctness. Prime Minister Orbán brings initiative while Prime Minister Tusk brings alignment with Brussels. In Sharm el-Sheikh, only decision-makers are invited.

Donald Trump's Diplomacy of Decisions – Peace as a Deal

The U.S. initiative in Egypt illustrates President Trump's signature style – direct, transactional, and outcome-driven. His diplomacy avoids intermediaries, bypasses institutions, and measures success by results.

Instead of calls for "de-escalation," the summit already produced tangible effects: a ceasefire since October 10, an exchange of prisoners, and a framework for Gaza's reconstruction. For Republicans and conservatives, this is a return to the classic maxim *peace through strength* – peace built through capability, not rhetoric.

After years of procedural diplomacy and moral signaling, Trump's approach revives the tradition of strategic realism – power, accountability, and decisive action. Europe's slow processes yield statements while Washington's initiative yields outcomes.

Europe Observes While Others Act

The European Union arrives in Sharm el-Sheikh as an observer, formally represented by Council President António Costa and major EU leaders, but with no real agenda. Berlin and Paris focus on humanitarian aid, London on reconstruction plans, Brussels on drafting another communiqué.

This reflects Europe's deeper marginalization in global affairs. For two years the EU has confined itself to donors' conferences while decisive actions have come from Washington, Ankara, and Cairo. Today that asymmetry is fully visible.

Poland, under the Tusk government and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski, has reverted to the rhetoric of "returning to Europe" while losing operational agency. Foreign policy has been reduced to public relations – a cycle of visits, photos, and declarations of "unity with Brussels." In a world defined by initiative, Warsaw once again sits in the audience, not on stage.

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Poland's Perspective – A State That Waits Instead of Acts

Twenty years ago, Poland co-led the "Coalition of the Willing" in Iraq, commanding a multinational stabilization division. Today, in another conflict shaping the region's future, Warsaw has neither voice nor role. This is not exclusion – it is self-marginalization through passivity.

Poland's absence in Sharm el-Sheikh sends a warning – a state silent in matters of peace will not be heard in matters of war. Without initiative, there is no agency.

President Karol Nawrocki remains the only national leader articulating a policy of sovereign realism – linking security to responsibility rather than emotion. His approach aligns with President Trump's philosophy – peace and security as functions of decision, not declaration.

Strategic Lessons for Poland

The Sharm el-Sheikh summit is a laboratory of the new world – one defined by decisions over debates, leadership over consensus, and results over ritual. For Poland, it is a test of maturity. To return as a co-shaper of policy, Warsaw must recover its culture of strategic initiative – the ability to act before being invited. President Nawrocki points toward statehood, realism, and renewed alliance with the United States. The Tusk government drifts instead in the logic of European alibi – where inaction hides behind the word "coordination." Peace in Gaza is more than symbolic for Poland. It reminds us that the world does not wait for the passive. To be a player, Poland must be present – not just aligned.

The Sobieski Institute publishes commentary in both Polish and English to support the strategic debate at home and to present the Polish perspective to international partners. Both versions of this text are based on the same data and conclusions but differ in style and emphasis, tailored to readers in Poland and in the international environment.

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