

SAMUEL SOKOL

# ISRAEL-BASED JEWISH JOURNALISM

CV and speaking topics





# IN THE FIELD

## ISRAEL AND DIASPORA REPORTAGE

Sam Sokol is a Jerusalem-based freelance correspondent working for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and various US and British Jewish newspapers. He was formerly an international and Jewish affairs correspondent for The Jerusalem Post and a reporter for the Israel Broadcasting Authority. His work on revolutionary Ukraine garnered him the 2015 B'nai B'rith World Center Award for Journalism Recognizing Excellence in Diaspora Reportage. His work has appeared in the Jerusalem Post, Times of Israel, Forward, Jewish Chronicle, Ha'aretz, Open Democracy, Columbia Journalism Review and other publications.

# ENGAGING SPEAKING TOPICS

## A BRIEF SUMMARY

Samuel has reported from both Israel and Europe and is available to discuss a variety of topical issues related to the Middle East conflict and the Jewish Diaspora. He has filed stories from Israel and the West Bank, Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, Georgia, France, Switzerland and elsewhere. He has covered religious violence in Israel, rocket fire and incendiary kites from Gaza and the Russian-backed separatist war in eastern Ukraine.





## Russia, fake news and the forgotten Jewish refugees of Ukraine

Two years prior to Russia's interference in the US Presidential election, the Kremlin launched a hybrid war on Ukraine, using fake news, propaganda and proxy-armies to destabilize its former imperial territory. As part of this effort, Moscow exaggerated the problem of Ukrainian antisemitism, fabricating fictional pogroms and accusing its adversaries of reviving Nazism. Caught in the middle of the conflict, Ukraine's Jews were hit hard, with tens of thousands of refugees fleeing to Israel in the face of the destruction of their communities and way of life.





## Covering contemporary European antisemitism

Antisemitism has been on the rise across Europe and many European Jews feel trapped between rising left and right-wing populism on the one hand and Islamic Judeophobia on the other. What is it like to cover resurgent European antisemitism as a Jewish reporter?



**Covering a country that hates the press:  
A journalist's experience of reporting on Israel in an age  
of increasing hostility toward the news media**

**Israelis' trust in the media has eroded significantly in recent years. What is it like to report on Israeli religious life, the Arab-Israeli conflict and other contentious topics while living as an orthodox Jew in a community in which the press is an object of disdain? And how does the widespread view that the media is biased affect those tasked with risking their lives to report the news?**



## Who is a Jew?

How Israel became a battleground over what it means to be Jewish

2018 marked the first year in the history of the state of Israel in which the majority of new immigrants under the law of return did not qualify as Jewish under the Orthodox interpretation of Halacha (Jewish law). They joined the hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish Israelis from the former Soviet Union unable to marry or divorce under the Orthodox dominated state Rabbinate. As Israelis argue over the proper role of non-Jews of Jewish descent in a Zionist state, debates over issues ranging from the role of non-orthodox denominations in public life to the institution of civil marriage. What will the future of a Jewish state look like after the religious kulturkampf?







## Israeli ultra-orthodoxy, religious extremism and the struggle for integration

A firsthand account of what it is like to cover religious extremism and violence in your own backyard. A resident of Beit Shemesh, a flashpoint between Haredi and secular Israelis, Sokol can describe just what it is like to work as a journalist when the religious conflict, and concomitant violence, occurs within walking distance of your own home.



## Terror, violence and rocket fire

Sam Sokol has covered stabbings, rocket barrages and incendiary attacks against Israel, accumulating stories both harrowing and heartwarming. Hear about life under fire and how it differs from what you see on TV.







## Israel's facilitation of European Holocaust denial

Since the end of the Cold War, Israel has worked hard to build lasting ties with the countries of the former Soviet Union. However, in the interests of realpolitik, the Jewish state has often overlooked rampant Holocaust revisionism sponsored by allied governments, instead praising them for their efforts at preserving the memory of European Jewry. When does using the politics of memory in pursuit of geopolitical goals stop being an acceptable tool of statecraft and become a crime against history?



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SPEAKING FEE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST