



THE ANNA SOBOL LEVY FELLOWSHIP (ASL) 2024-2025



Left to Right: Asher SPAIN, Valérie SUSSKIND, Maddy FRIEDMAN

Report & Activities Summary

Fellowship Manager:

Valérie Susskind

Fellows:

- Maddy FRIEDMAN
- Asher SPAIN

THE ASL FELLOWS

****In Their Own Words****

Maddy Friedman



Hello! My name is Madeline Friedman, and I am from Madison, Wisconsin. I graduated from the University of Mississippi, Hotty Toddy! I hold a Master's degree in Communications from Dublin City University. I am so excited to be an ASL Scholar this year, studying Diplomacy. After this year, I am excited to combine my diplomacy and communications background in the fight against Antisemitism.

Asher Spain



Asher Spain, originally from West Point, New York, completed his undergraduate studies at Harvard and is pursuing his Master's in Government with a focus in Counter-Terrorism and Homeland Security Studies at Reichman University. In his free time, he enjoys traveling, exploring new cities, working out, and DJing local events. After his year as an Anna Sobol Levy Fellow, Asher will go back to the United States and serve as an Armor Officer in the U.S. Army.

THE ASL MANAGER

Valérie Susskind



Valérie Susskind was born and raised in Paris, France. She spent many years in New York, NY where she earned a BA in English Communications at Yeshiva University and an MBA in Marketing and Management at NYU Stern School of Business. She held various Marketing positions and taught Marketing and Management courses at LIM Fashion College in New York City. She moved to Israel with her family in 2019 from Riverdale, NY and currently resides in Ra'anana. At Reichman University, Valérie is

Deputy Director of Admissions and Recruitment for Master's Degrees at the Raphael Recanati International School, including the MA in Government. Valérie started managing the programming for the Anna Sobol Levy Fellowship in December 2021. For ASL, Valérie oversees the process from recruitment until the end of the Fellows' stay at Reichman, including programming, speakers and day trips.

Activities Summary

Due to the war and the current security situation, we had a reduced schedule this year. We still managed to bring top-notch programming to our Fellows!

Date	Speaker or Trip Destination	Topic
Nov 2024	Jonathan Davis and Valérie Susskind	Welcome, introductions and expectations
Jan 2025	Trip to Hapalmach Museum	History of the Palmach
Jan 2025	Mark Regev	Trump and Israel- Act II
Feb 2025	Trip to Jerusalem with Miri Eisin	Security and Urban Complexity
Mar 2025	Barak Ben Tsur	Remarks on the intelligence failure - (the October 7 war)
Mar 2025	Naftali Granot	Current Situation
May 2025	Danny Carmon	The significance and role of diplomacy and its contribution to national resilience, Israel's foreign policy, the UN, foreign aid
May 2025	Visit to Machaneh-Aviv army base, home to IDF Spokespersons.	Discussion and presentation by the IDF Spokespersons Unit.

Speakers and Guides

Amb. Mark Regev



Mark Regev is an Australian-Israeli diplomat, government advisor and civil servant. Between June 2020 and April 2021, he served as the Prime Minister's Senior Advisor for Foreign Affairs and International Communications. From 2016 to 2020 Regev was Ambassador of Israel to the United Kingdom. Previously, he was the International Spokesperson for the Prime Minister's Office (2007 to 2016). He serves as the s the chairman of the Abba Eban Institute for Diplomacy and Foreign Relations at Reichman University.

Col. Ret. Miri Eisin



In 2006, Eisin became the foreign media advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. She was the first woman in Israel's history to serve in the position. Eisin started the job when the Second Lebanon War broke out in July 2006. In November 2007, Eisin accompanied Olmert to the Annapolis Conference, a Middle East peace conference held in Annapolis, Maryland. Eisin has an undergraduate degree in political science and Middle Eastern Studies from Tel Aviv University. She went to Haifa University and the IDF Defense College for graduate studies in security studies. She is a senior fellow at the International Institute for Counterterrorism (ICT) at Reichman University.

Dr. Barak Ben-Tzur



Dr. Col.(Res.) Barak Ben-Tzur is an expert in risk and threat analysis, strategic intelligence, Middle Eastern studies and counter-terrorism.

Naftali Granot



Naftali Granot concluded his intelligence career as Deputy Director of the Mossad in 2007. He joined the Mossad in 1982 and served in Lebanon and various western countries. Granot was nominated Head of the HUMINT (Human Intelligence) division in 2002. Granot lead many ground-breaking operations for the Mossad. In 2004, he was the recipient of the highest security decoration awarded by the President of the State of Israel.

Amb. Danny Carmon



Attaché in Washington, DC, from 1978 to 1982 and member of the Israeli Delegation to the Camp David peace talks. He was in Israel's embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, first as Consul, Counselor and Administrative Officer, and later as commercial attaché and as Deputy Chief of Mission.

Ambassador Carmon served as Head of the Situation Emergency Room in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. Carmon also served as Head of the Information and Internet Division in the

Department of Public Affairs as well as Head of the Bureau for Coordination, and Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Director General's Bureau. He also was Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative at Israel's Mission to the United Nations in New York. Ambassador Daniel Carmon was appointed Deputy Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Head of MASHAV – Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation. He also served as Ambassador of Israel to India and Sri Lanka. He completed his term in September 2018.

Our Program in Pictures

Trip to Hapalmach Museum

January 2025



Left to Right: Asher SPAIN, Valérie SUSSKIND, Maddy FRIEDMAN

On Sunday, January 12th, our first Anna Sobol Levy Fellowship convened at Landwer Café in the Ramat Aviv Mall. The gathering began with discussions about the fellowship's plans and expectations for the coming year. This was complemented by a social hour, during which participants had the opportunity to reconnect, share stories, and strengthen relationships before our next destination: the Palmach Museum.

After the social hour, our group proceeded on foot to the Palmach Museum. The exhibit focused on the history of the Palmach—also known as the “Strike Force”—the underground army of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine) during the British Mandate for Palestine (1941-1948). As the precursor to the Israeli Defense Force, the Palmach played a critical role in Israel’s War for Independence in 1948.

The museum utilized an immersive approach, guiding visitors through a series of themed rooms that detailed the founding of the Palmach, their rigorous training, their distinctive culture, the composition of their ranks, and the causes for which they fought. A significant emphasis was placed on the Palmach’s contributions during the War of Independence, providing a comprehensive understanding of their crucial role in shaping modern Israel.

This visit was especially significant because understanding the Palmach—its founding principles, mission, and the valor of its fighters—offers profound insights into the roots and evolution of today’s Israeli Defense Forces.

Meeting with Marc Regev

January 2025



Left to Right: Asher SPAIN, Maddy FRIEDMAN, Mark REGEV, Valérie SUSSKIND

On Monday, January 21, the ASL scholars had lunch with former Ambassador Mark Regev in the ICT conference room. He began by sharing his personal journey, including his move from Australia to Israel and the historical context of his family's story, as his parents were Holocaust survivors.

Following introductions with Maddy and Asher, Ambassador Regev detailed his career trajectory—from serving in the IDF to joining the foreign service, becoming an ambassador, and working in the Prime Minister's Office. He provided a thorough analysis of the evolving US-Israel relationship under the new US president and shared engaging stories from his time abroad, connecting them to current events.

Trip to Jerusalem with Miri Eisin

February 2025



Left to Right: Valérie SUSSKIND, Miri EISIN, Asher SPAIN, Maddy FRIEDMAN.



Left to Right: Miri EISIN, Maddy FRIEDMAN, Asher SPAIN, Valérie SUSSKIND.



Left to Right: Asher SPAIN, Miri EISIN, Maddy FRIEDMAN, Valérie SUSSKIND.

On Tuesday February 4th, the Anna Sobol Levy fellowship participated in the Jerusalem Security Tour, an in-depth exploration of the city's security landscape, historical borders, and geopolitical challenges. Led by Miri Eisin, a retired Colonel in the Israeli Defense Force with extensive intelligence experience, the tour provided critical insights into the intersection of security, urban planning, and regional governance.

The first stop offered a southern view of the Old City, where discussions centered on Jerusalem's complex territorial divisions and their implications for the Jerusalem Municipality, East Jerusalem residents, and the broader Middle East region.

At a viewpoint overlooking Bethlehem, the group examined the role of security infrastructure, particularly the wall and fence constructed during the second Intifada. Originally designed as a counterterrorism measure, the barrier remains a defining element in the region's security framework.

The tour continued to Rachel's Tomb; an important religious site now enclosed by high walls due to past security threats. Further discussions addressed urban planning issues in East Jerusalem, where unregulated construction has led to infrastructure deficits, echoing challenges faced by low-income communities worldwide.

The day concluded with a panoramic view from the Mount of Olives, reinforcing Jerusalem's status as a focal point of religious, political, and security concerns. The overall experience emphasized the delicate balance between maintaining security, preserving cultural heritage, and ensuring accessibility in one of the world's most historically significant cities.

Meeting with Barak Ben Tsur

March 2025



Left to Right: Maddy FRIEDMAN, Asher SPAIN, Barak BEN TSUR, Valérie SUSSKIND.

On Wednesday, March 26th, we met with Dr. Barak Ben Tsur, at the International Institute for Counterterrorism to discuss the intelligence failures surrounding the events of October 7th. The presentation focused on understanding these failures through a structured framework of three levels of analysis: strategic, operational, and tactical.

Using this framework, we examined intelligence failures throughout history and compared them to the breakdowns that occurred on October 7th. This

comparative analysis provided a clearer understanding of how intelligence failures can manifest across different levels and contexts.

The significance of this presentation and discussion lie in its ability to foster meaningful dialogue on how to improve intelligence practices going forward. As individuals operating in government-adjacent roles, such conversations are essential in identifying ways we can help prevent similar failures in the future.

Meeting with Naftali Granot

March 2025



Left to Right: Asher SPAIN, Maddy FRIEDMAN, Valérie SUSSKIND, Naftali GRANOT

On March 31st, we had breakfast with Naftali Granot, a retired senior Mossad operative with 25 years of experience and a current researcher at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). He shared his insights on key challenges facing Israel and the United States today, such as the Iran missile crisis, and encouraged us to engage in critical discussion. He also answered the Fellows' questions about his life and career.

Meeting with Danny Carmon

May 2025



Left to Right: Asher SPAIN, Danny CARMON, Valérie SUSSKIND, Maddy FRIEDMAN

On Monday, May 5th, the Fellows met with Ambassador Daniel Carmon at the International Institute for Counterterrorism for a conversation about his decades-long career in Israeli diplomacy and the strategic dynamics shaping Israel's foreign relations today. Ambassador Carmon served in the Israeli Foreign Service for over 40 years, beginning in 1973 and concluding in 2018 as Israel's Ambassador to India.

Our discussion touched on a variety of topics, beginning with the structure of the United Nations (UN) and how it influences global decision-making. Ambassador Carmon explained that, within the UN, each country is allocated one vote, regardless of size or power. He noted that this structure allows for voting blocs to form, giving smaller or ideologically aligned countries disproportionate influence in shaping outcomes. This insight challenged the assumption that the UN is a purely neutral or representative forum and raised important questions about its utility as a proxy for global consensus.

The conversation also delved into Israel's strategic partnerships, particularly with India and China. Ambassador Carmon shared perspectives on the opportunities and complexities of navigating these relationships. This discussion was especially valuable in providing a firsthand account of how international institutions function in practice and the nuanced considerations that shape Israel's diplomatic choices.

Trip to the IDF Spokespersons Unit

May 2025



Left to Right: Kelly ODES, Valérie SUSSKIND, Maddy FRIEDMAN, Asher SPAIN



Left to Right: Tammy SHUR, Valérie SUSSKIND, Maddy FRIEDMAN, Asher SPAIN

The Fellows had an incredible and insightful visit to the IDF Spokesperson Unit. Upon arrival, we were warmly welcomed by Noga Peer, who guided us through the base and brought us to the communications floor. This is where the IDF crafts its key messages to the world. It's also where soldiers engage directly with international media outlets, communicating in a wide range of languages, and where the IDF's social media presence is strategically managed.

We had the opportunity to hear from Kelly Odes, who provided fascinating insight into the nuances of IDF messaging, particularly the challenges and strategies involved in translating messages across multiple languages and cultural contexts. Tammy Shur, the head of social media, gave us an in-depth look at the IDF's diverse range of social platforms, explaining how each account is carefully tailored to reach and resonate with different target audiences around the globe.

*****End of 2024-2025 Annual Report*****