

SAMANTHA DE BENDERN

Associate Fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House, with deep knowledge on Ukraine, Russia, NATO, and the EU

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Topics

- Government
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Samantha de Bendern is an Associate Fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House specialised in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. She has worked for NATO HQ as the Political Officer for NATO – Ukraine relations and in NATO’s Public Diplomacy Department as Information Officer for partner countries in the Former Soviet Union. In the early 1990’s Samantha was the Political Advisor to the first EU Ambassador to the Russian Federation and in 2014 she was part of a British Government funded project to help the Ukrainian Security and Defence Council combat disinformation.

After ten years as an international civil servant Samantha moved to the private sector and worked as a banker for Coutts Bank Switzerland and Merrill Lynch Bank of America. She has also been a consultant and private investigator for Control Risks Group.

This relatively rare mix of public and private sector experience places Samantha in a privileged position to be able to explain geopolitics security and military issues to business audiences by presenting the facts in ways that are relevant and understandable to the private sector.

As a confident and accomplished public speaker, Samantha de Bendern has talked about NATO to Russian military personnel in military academies in Moscow and provincial Russia, was the first NATO civilian officer to undertake information outreach projects with the Serbian military following the Kosovo war, and has significant experience talking about Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to government and business audiences in her three main working languages, English, French and Russian. She is a regular commentator on various British and international television and radio stations (BBC, GB News, Al-Jazeera, France-24, Belsat and others.)

Apart from Russia and Eurasia, Samantha is well versed in EU affairs, disinformation and combating financial crime. Apart from her position at Chatham House she is also a Senior Advisor at the Conflict Studies Research Center (former Defence Academy) and part of the Associate Network of LOW Europe, a Brussels based strategic communications consultancy.

Samantha has lived and worked in Russia, Ukraine, India, France, Belgium, the Czech Republic and the UK and is happy to undertake public speaking assignments in English, French and Russian.

Samantha is graduate of UCL London, holds an MSC in Politics from the London School of Economics, has a Masters Degree in Financial Management from the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Paris and is currently following the part time 2021-23 Crime Fiction Creative Writing MA at the University of East Anglia.

She is currently researching a book on Ukrainian Identity and in the process

finishing an espionage noir novel based in Belarus in 1994 and 2020.

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