

STATEMENT OF THE JURY FOR THE 2007 UNICEF ANNUAL PRIZE FOR
ELECTRONIC MEDIA

20 NOVEMBER 2007

Among the works broadcast in the electronic media, the Jury unanimously agreed that the best entry was the **HALTED CHILDHOOD** TV story by Mr. Dejan Radulovic, aired on TV Avala.

It is a touching, but professionally high quality production on growing up under difficult circumstances, about poverty as an environment in which children's rights are violated repeatedly. The story does not focus a personal plight or an incident, but social vulnerability and exclusion. It presents extremely adverse social circumstances of children in the Markovic family.

The fate of children in this particular case extrapolates to fates of children in many other similar families. The stereotype is a story of personal misfortune, tragic destiny, and an occasional family drama where the society provides only a distant, disinterested framework. The "Halted Childhood" is not such a story. Quite the opposite, these children were fortunate enough to come to this world healthy, in a harmonious family, but under very adverse social circumstances. It is neither a bizarre mishap, nor a web of circumstances. Although they live in the capital, most of the things that the city offers are beyond their reach. This story contradicts the prejudice that it happens to "the usual others" from "typical" marginalized groups.

This story also painfully reminds us on the plethora of unhappiness that accompanies the society in transition, and on the vast extent of vulnerability and exclusion of children from various social groups – the displaced, unemployed, poor ... In spite of this, these children are diligent, responsible, curious and interested. Their qualities outgrow the circumstances in which they live. Owing to them and the author's excellence, this bitter story has become a powerful document of the time in which we live.

In the newspaper article competition, the Jury has agreed that "**The Abusers**" by Mr. Branislav Grkovic published in the VREME weekly is the best.

The Jury recognizes all features of good investigative journalism in this article. The story has many layers, the text provides abundance of information, and the author's style is very specific. The new topic has been courageously exposed and the author provocatively discusses the phenomenon that the society is still not ready to recognize. The journalist, Mr Grkovic, takes a more difficult perspective – he opted against description of misfortune and personal drama of children that are still fairly commonplace. Instead, he raises a topic with a power of reasonable warning that the society must not await this problem unprepared.

He focuses the issue of child pornography as one of the most despicable forms of child abuse by adults. The story exposes the pattern by which the new era of technology mirrors the old power imbalance, readiness of abusers to transpose their old criminal habits to the cyberspace and empowered by the new technology occupy that space before children have even stepped into it. It is an excellent and convincing piece of investigative work: diverse sources and quality insights. It also elucidates the regional dimension.

The article appeals to fight this form of crime and violence back by good preparation and adequate policies. This text and author's achievement feature an additional quality: they show and prove that it can be done.