

**The UNICEF Annual Media Prize
for high quality and ethical reporting on children & children's rights in print media goes to**

**Ms. SNEZANA PRLJEVIC of the Belgrade Daily *Politika*
for the article CONSCIENCE ON THE TEST published on 24 February 2004**

The award-winning article talks about children with disabilities, families with children with disabilities and their numerous daily problems which remain unnoticed to their peers who do not share the same destiny. It is precisely because of this that their parents and caregivers should be given much more support. In her article, Snezana Prljevic reminds us all that this is not only about the money...

...there is also the issue of our conscience, If children are taught from the early age that there are some children, some peers of their, who have not had easy life, who are ill or who are not as dexterous at play as they are, then the new generations of young people will grow who will be able to give a hand to their friends who suffer from some affliction or another.

At the same time, the article reminds us that these children must not be discriminated against in any way, that they must not be excluded and particularly must not be ghettoised. All the actors in the society - the governments, the administrative and legislative bodies - all of them must always and above all act in the best interest of the child.

Such an affirmative approach undoubtedly helps the public to better understand the problems experienced by families with children with disabilities. It, at the same time, promotes the principle of the equal rights of every child. As the article headline suggests, it is also a kind of an appeal to the social conscience and responsibility. It makes us see these children and their families with much greater understanding. Finally, the text is an invitation for action; an appeal for providing equal conditions for development to every child.

The UNICEF annual Media Prize for quality and ethical reporting on children and children's rights in electronic media goes to SNEZANA SPICA of the RTS *Kraljevo* for the TV report on **WHEN FORTUNE PLAYS A GAME broadcast on 7 February 2004, and 30 October 2004.**

Two children live all alone at the remote village of Orlja in the Raska District. Without parents. Without a kind word from anyone. Without any support. They live in difficult conditions which are inappropriate not only for their age and needs.

These children, however, are not helpless. They do not yield to their wretched fate. They do not succumb. Without a trace of pathos, but with much warmth, the prize winning author presents these children as great fighters, as those who firmly believe that sooner or later they too will get a tiny grain of happiness.

This manner of reporting – which depicts not only the big problems and bare survival, but also active children's confronting the troubles – certainly exerts important influence on the attitude of the public opinion towards children and childhood. Logically, it should also impact behaviour of the adults.

By avoiding the use of stereotypes and sensationalism in portraying children, the prize-winning report contributes to a wider social action and mobilisation of the society. Such reporting also represents a good promotion of child rights set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, whose 15th anniversary we are celebrating just now.