

# MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed until 6pm, Friday October 19<sup>th</sup>

## PEACE AWARDS 2001

### FOCUS ON ASYLUM SEEKERS



Powerful, in-depth analysis of the issues surrounding asylum seekers and our immigration detention centres dominated the major awards at the 23rd annual **United Nations Association of Australia Media Peace Awards**, announced tonight (Friday October 19th).

The national awards were presented at a dinner at the Grand Hyatt in Melbourne. They recognise media efforts to promote peace and resolve conflict, and cover specialist categories such as Multicultural Issues, Aboriginal Reconciliation, Environmental Issues, Women's Rights and Positive Images of the Older Person.

The biggest winner was **SBS** television, which won three of the eight award categories, followed closely by the **ABC**, with two awards (including Best Radio) and a Special Commendation. Other winners included **'The Age'**, **'The Weekend Australian'**, and **'The Financial Review'**. **'The Cairns Post'** received a Special Commendation in the Aboriginal Reconciliation category.

The chairman of the judging panel, Michael Smith, Chairman of Weber Shandwick Worldwide, said that entries maintained the extremely high standard of recent years, particularly in the television category. "The winning entries showed that world-class journalism is compatible with media efforts to resolve conflict rather than merely describe it and analyse it. That is the defining characteristic of these awards."

The United Nations Association of Australia presented two other significant awards tonight. The UNAA Founder's Award was presented to Sir Gustav Nossal for his contribution to world health, and the advancement of Aboriginal reconciliation. At a special function last Wednesday, the 2001 International Peace Award was given to East Timorese leader, Xanana Gusmao, for his inspirational leadership and commitment to peace and freedom in East Timor. **A full list of winners is attached.**

**For further details, please contact Patricia Collett, UNAA Executive Director, on 9482 3655 or 0418 544 315.**