

Stefán Einarsson, the winner of last year's UN European Ad Competition is no stranger to international prizes in graphic design, but he says winning the UN competition helped him gain attention both at home and internationally. "It was quite important for me to get so much attention to my work," Einarsson says, "and for such a good cause too."

Einarsson won first prize in last year's competition (www.wecanendpoverty.eu) which focused on World Poverty in the run up to the World Summit on the Millennium Development Goals in New York in September 2010. Einarsson's winning ad was appropriately entitled: "Dear leaders. We are still waiting."

The first prize, 5,000 Euros, was handed over to the 49 year old Icelandic designer at a ceremony in Madrid, Spain overseen by Her Majesty Sofia, Queen of Spain and attended by UNDP Goodwill Ambassador, Actor Antonio Banderas. Chairman of the jury, Jacques Séguela noted that Einarsson was "fiercely competing with himself" since another one of his ads won the third place and yet another one was among the top thirty.

Einarsson's winning entry later earned him two top graphic design awards in his homeland, Iceland.

He is one of the jurors for the 2011 European UN Ad competition focusing on violence against women. "I am looking forward to seeing original designs and messages in this year's competition," he says and urges creative people to participate regardless of their age and experience. "My tip to potential participants is to be creative and not to limit themselves. It is ok to be provocative and the message and design should be a challenge to bring this big problem to an end."

Einarsson has earlier in his career designed an ad to promote the fight against human trafficking which attracted much attention.

In "Dear leaders – we are still waiting" his winning ad from last year's competition, he combined the feet of African children waiting in line for food with the upper bodies of world leaders.

"I wanted to illustrate the contrast between two worlds, the rich and the poor. At the same time the ad shows that we are all alike, we all have bodies. The world leaders symbolize power and money, but they also represent responsibilities. It is their responsibility to turn words into actions."

Stefán Einarsson is the Artistic Director of Icelandic ad agency Hvíta húsið (the White House, <http://www.hvitahusid.is/english/>). His work can be seen on his website: <http://stefaneinarsson.com/>