

PROGRAM DATE: 2014-12-29

PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY –WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE – SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
DR. MALKA	Hello, I'm Dr. Amaleya Goneos-Malka, welcome to 'Womanity – Women in Unity'. The show that celebrates prominent and ordinary African Women's milestone achievements in their struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence.
DR. MALKA	Joining us today is South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mrs. Nomvula Mokonyane. Welcome to the show Minister.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Thank you.
DR. MALA	Minister your life has been tied together with the history of the South African nation. Starting from the age of 15 when you actively participated against the struggle of apartheid and during that period you became a member of the Young Christian Students and were a founding member of the Congress of South African Students. You have been a former activist and leader of civic movements; Kagiso Residents Organisation; a former Shop Steward and leader of the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa, now the South African Commercial Catering an Allied Workers Union; you've served in various leadership capacities in the ANC as well as its alliance structures, including as a member of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party; NEC member of the ANC Women's League and NEC member of the ANC since 1994. You've also served in the Gauteng Legislature in various portfolio committees and became a member of the United Democratic Front; a member and organiser The Federation of The Transvaal Women; Chairperson of the ANC's West Rand Branch; Deputy Chairperson of the ANC Women's League; a member of the SACP Central Committee; a member of the ANC Women's League NEC. You've also served as Chairperson at the Housing Sub-Committee; a member of the Executive Council of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment between 1996 up to 1999; MEC of Safety and Liaison from 1994 to 2004 and MEC of Housing from 2004 to 2009. That is an incredible portfolio and career. Can you please share with us some of the landmarks that impacted on you the most in your career?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	My own life experience. I come from humble family and generally working class family that unfortunately lived under a very oppressive environment in South Africa and on the other side being a strong religious person coming from a strong Catholic background and the Catholic practice showed me some of the things that can be done normally or that could have been normal and yet the living conditions in our country, in my township, were the opposite and out of that curiosity crept in and being part of the Christian Student Movement we were then able to be exposed to our own life experience in South Africa, solidarity with the Christian students of Mozambique which was Lourenco Marques at that point and the solidarity that we got from the Italian Catholic Student Movement, the German Catholic Student

	<p>Movement, it really showed a contrast of the life of a human being and it was out of that that our student movement came into being because it was not just about being Christian students we also talked about inequality, human rights, the love for one another and then in that there then there was a founding of a progressive student movement COSUS?? and one had to belong there because there it was about fighting for equality, fighting for the right, demanding the right of students to be part of their own education system and our parents. The main thrust was the demand that we need parent/student/teacher associations which were not there in the black schools and that on its own helped us to understand the politics of South Africa and the good thing about COSUS?? was that we then came to realise that there's an organisation somewhere outside of South Africa called the ANC that has adopted the Freedom Charter as its policy document because our call was about the doors are learning and culture being open to all. So that became also our clarion call and as we looked at that clause of the Freedom Charter we then got exposed to the entire Freedom Charter, without knowing that this is the Freedom Charter. There shall be housing, security and comfort, all are equal before the law and that on its own then made COSUS?? not to only be a student movement, we also got involved into community issues, raising our own family experiences, raising our community experiences and the other thing about all shall be equal before the law had to do with our own life experience. My dad passed on when I was 7 years, but immediately upon his death I came to know at that age of 15/16 - between 16 and 18 - that in fact the head of my family is not my mother, it is my eldest brother because the law was saying my mother is a minor.</p>
DR. MALKA	So following through with all of the patriarchy that you had to address...
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	<p>Exactly it was not about education, it was a life, like I'm saying, it was a life experience. My home permit had my brother as the head and then minors started one, with my mother, and all of that and yet, this is the woman who was left with us and it is those things that we... that really got all of us to then get into the civic movement, so, we did not just wish to be part of it, you got involved into civic struggle out of your life experience from the student politics of the doors of learning and culture, the rights of your parents and yourself to be represented and as that happened, we then had to go to tertiary, were thrown out of tertiary in KwaZulu-Natal because of the, by the Zulu police. Upon coming back my mother said I didn't send you for politics, go and look for a job and that's when I got a job as quality controller at OK Bazaars and getting in there, I became, within two months I became a Shop Steward, I then got into the National Shop Steward Council and that Union, KAHUSA?? then, which is now called SACCAWU, has got the majority of fixed members being women because it's in the commercial and catering sector and amongst other things there also was about the rights of women, boom, on my face. What is this about? It's about the rights for maternity benefits and on the other side in the communities it's about the rights of women in terms of property ownership, then that then conscientised me on the issues of gender struggles. It's not the book, it's the life experience that said things were not right and when we organised the longest strike ever in the commercial sector, we got detained, it was seen as a political strike and, and that on its own then exposed me to not only Trade Unionism but again to what the system it then said I was doing, furthering the aims of a banned organisation, which I didn't, I wasn't aware about, I was just</p>

	fighting.....
DR. MALKA	You were fighting for women's causes....
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Yes, yes.
DR. MALKA	...as a right but inadvertently it came out as being part of the philosophies of the ANC.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	<p>Exactly, of the ANC ... and out of that when we came out of that detention as shop stewards of the Trade Union because even at that time we were pushing that unions must adopt the Freedom Charter. Out of that experience we then had to also protect ourselves and as we protect ourselves from arrest and harassment there were people who were teaching us, training us and all those things, others were organisers of the United Democratic Front. Somebody I met who then I also became an MEC under his leadership, he was a national organiser of the United Democratic Front, the former Minister Steve Tshwete who then pulled me in and said you are going to be an organiser, you, because I can see you've got energy, you will get bored. I was amongst the few women, there were only three women throughout the country who were organisers and we were organising for the United Democratic Front and then MaSisulu came and said no, no, no, don't make her only the organiser of the UDF she must organise women and that's when I became the organiser of the Federation of Transvaal Women but then an affiliate of the UDF then being led by the leadership of the UDF. Mobilising rural women providing, and our issues were so, our programme was so issue based, just provision of a day care centre for children in the townships, organising women into sewing projects, ABET Adult Basic Education, skilling women, for us these were the things that must restore the dignity of the African women and in the process then we got in touch with the ANC when the UDF was banned we remained at home and we then came to realise that, in fact, there is nothing horrendous about ANC, if this is what the ANC stands for, then in fact this is what we believe in and that's when then we got involved in the underground structures of the ANC, we were taken out for training both in Sweden in Canada in Cuba and in many other... I went to Angola for a short period just on a crash course on how to survive military attacks and how to carry arms and all those things, how to incite people in the country, doing propaganda, being trained in London through the Anti Apartheid Movement; being trained in local government and development in Sweden; being taken to Harvard by the ANC and at that time our quest was about freedom in our lifetime and all these things, and working with older women and male comrades made us to be... to embrace non-sexism, to embrace non-racialism, to embrace non-discrimination of religion, race or creed out of our own life experience. So working in the rural areas, working in the urban areas, working with white women who were in the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee, the Student Movement, NEWSASO the white students, helped us to feel that there's nothing wrong about non-racialism, so, life experience and struggles of our people defined the space that one found herself in, until today.</p>
DR.MALKA	Thank you for sharing your journey thus far.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Thank you.

DR. MALKA	We will be right back after this.
	AD BREAK
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation, Miss Nomvula Mokonyane. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter@WomanityTalk. Now picking up on our discussion....
DR. MALKA	Minister, you're now ... previously you held the post of Premier of Gauteng from 2009 to 2014 then you have taken on the new office becoming Minister of Water and Sanitation and this is obviously, coming in the new office, can you share with us how your new term is in office?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	I think it's a daunting task but quite exciting and fulfilling out of my own life experience and having been part of the change that we want to see. One of the things that we have decided with my Deputy Minister who also is an old ANC activist is to personify the work of the department. We have personified the work of the department through a woman.
DR. MALKA	'Cause I understand that the overriding philosophy of the Department is "Water is Life, Sanitation is Dignity"
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	"Water is Life, Sanitation is Dignity" that's personifying so that you then say it can't be correct, therefore, that South Africa, you can still have a woman who walks one hour forty minutes to go and collect water. It can't be correct that a woman gets raped as she jumps a road because there's no decent sanitation. We have instilled that personification so that then we do not become abstract and want to be engineers. This is about life and dignity and therefore we must now take the policies of the Department and localise them to fit different communities and our interest in the collective that we have, through myself and the Deputy Minister, is that we need to partner with the Department of Corporative Governments, we must partner with human settlements, we must partner with science and technology, we must partner with communication, we must partner with education, we must partner with agriculture, energy, every.... in fact we are a cross cutting department.
DR.MALKA	So it's increasing the integration of different departments...
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	That helps, yes.
DR. MALKAto help fulfil the milestones and mandates of the department.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Exactly, yes. We... there is nowhere where this department acts alone and but also it has been a good decision to have a department called Water and Sanitation because then the department is able to move across, but, (excuse me) to help South Africa to have a proper integrated plan on water and sanitation
DR.MALKA	And I understand you've made a personification "Water and Sanitation" in the image of a woman. We have yourself as a lady, we have the Deputy Minister as a lady, is women representation in the ministry one of the priorities on your agenda?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Not only representation, beneficiation and active participation because sometime we can have representation but the outputs may not yield the result and hence amongst other things that we have done with the Deputy Minister is to go throughout the length and breadth of the country but starting mostly with our provinces and our local authorities, saying what are you doing, how best are you doing things and how best can we deal with the rural areas. In our 100 days in office, within a period of 64 days we intervened on an old single

	<p>purpose dam which was built 30 years ago in a huge community in KwaZulu-Natal and the dam was always used just for provision of water for irrigation. We said we're not engineers but here is the water, here are the villages, you open this dam such that even the villages receive. We were told that we are acting against the law and all the agreements and we said well, if we go to jail those village communities will visit us. We are speaking today, that dam we have converted it – community benefits. We went to Giyani, a woman stood in the presence of all of us and said “I have been raped three times and I have been raped on my way to go and fetch water, so there is no way that I will stop walking that path because I need water”. We came in with the Deputy Minister. We again showed how things can be done differently and we said in honour of this woman and in defence of many others who can fall victim of what she has gone through, we're going to put three teams to work 24 hours a day to sort out the waterworks, the purification systems and as we speak today, that woman has got water in her standpipe, but remember, there are many other silent voices who have not said this experience but who might have been victims in the same light. So our approach on the gender struggles has to do with how we plan things as a country and how we must always personify, don't do things because they have to be done and you don't care about the social impact and we've actually moved issues of water and sanitation away from economic and big guys and big girls story, to say it's also a social fact. If you want to promote equality, deal with this. Remember when you also look at the reproductive rights of a woman, you need dignified sanitation, you need water for hygiene. It's not my design every month to have my periods and if I live in an area where I can't clean my body, I stand a chance of having infections and all those things. If I don't have.....</p>
DR. MALKA	But it jeopardises also for young girls going to school because they...
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	...to school – absenteeism and all those things....
DR. MALKAabsenteeism.....
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	<p>So that's why we saying we personify everything that we do we've actually said there's a MaDlamini it's Mrs. Dlamini, a MaDlamini personifies a woman in the village, it can also be a business woman, a MaDlamini but also it can be your clan name being a little girl, being a MaDlamini, so, the trickle-down effect to say let's not only think about the big things for water for mining, water for energy and yet we forget about this newly born baby who must be born in an area where there's water and where there's dignified sanitation. So, in fact, somebody said are you not over emphasising on women and we were saying in fact, let's over emphasise on women because the trickle-down effect is part of promoting peace and stability. If you help the woman, if you help the girl child there will be peace and stability.</p>
DR. MALKA	I think that's a good logic to apply. We will be right back after this.
	AD BREAK
DR. MALKA	<p>You are listening to 'Womanity-Women in Unity' on Channel Africa, the voice of the African Renaissance, on frequency 9625 KHz, on the 31 meter band. Today we're talking to South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation, Miss Nomvula Mokonyane. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter@WomanityTalk. Now picking up on our discussion....</p>

DR. MALKA	Minister you've mentioned the various integrations between departments in South Africa in conjunction with your department. Increasingly we function in a global society, are there any collaborations or significant projects that you're working on with other countries in Africa?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Trans-boundary collaboration is one of the key things for this department because we are a country that is water scarce and our water courses are shared by other neighbouring countries. We've got a working relationship with Lesotho who are now doing phase 2 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. We've got the Great Inga? Project with the DRC using water to generate energy. We're working with Zimbabwe to get water from the side of Zimbabwe and make sure that they've got irrigation in Bulawayo but it must come and relieve us on the problems of water shortage in Limpopo and the north of Gauteng. We've got the programmes that we are working on the Orange River with Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique where we also are looking at the Orange River catchment. We've got a relationship with Swaziland as well, where we are also looking at the side of Limpopo, but we have also multi-national collaborations, where in terms of the MDG's, we are now looking at.....
DR. MALKA	I'll just explain to listeners that those are our Millennium Development Goals.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Yes, the Millennium Development Goals that were agreed upon. Now that we have come to 2014, what needs to be done. We've been part of the advocacy work that is looking at making sure that we've got the SDG, we've got the Sustainable Development Goals now with water becoming one of the priorities and we've just held a global agenda and Water Development Summit and even in that, we've also agreed that we have to engender all elements that have to do with water and sanitation and like I have said, we have already started to do that in the country. Lastly...
DR. MALKA	Do you find that we're pioneers in a way, from a South African perspective?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	We are pioneers in others but we have also improved on what others have done because remember we come when others have actually gone through the same journey we have travelled but there are also Best Practices that many countries are picking from us, even on the response to climate change, one of the things that we are saying now is that we can't all be relying on potable water we must use conservation which South Africa must learn from other countries, two: we must look at desalination, it is an expensive approach but if we massify, it can actually come reasonable. We must use alternative technology for sanitation and we must promote the recycling and the reuse of water and lastly, we must promote alternative technology for energy sources so that the water that we use to generate energy, we can actually direct it somewhere. 62% Of water in South Africa is used for agriculture; it's an anomaly, that's what we also want
DR. MALKA	62%?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Yes.
DR.MALKA	And what is the normal, the standard or the universal...?
MINISTER NOMVULA	The universal it's under 40%.

MOKONYANE	
DR. MALKA	That's very significant.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Yes. The universal is under....it's between 35 and 38 and I believe that it is where it is because of the discussion ceiling about agriculture and ownership and hence we are even reviewing even the water ownership patterns because water is a constitutional right in South Africa and we therefore need to start saying are we correct to say that everybody can be the owner of water? I don't believe in that. That's a game changer we're bringing. People can talk about land redistribution; can talk about redistribution; ownership of mineral resources. I believe the backbone on all those things is water ownership. It's in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution, it therefore means that government is the sole owner and government it's the delegated responsibility to the ministry. We should be the sole owners and we must then set terms and conditions for the use within a prescribed condition and that's what we want to do. We've already started to generate a discussion document, we'll have sessions to talk about it so that we avoid even the acid mine drainage problem that we have where polluters mess up this scarce resource that do not actually own up to the mess.
DR.MALKA	That is a significant challenge and as you say, that is going to be a game changer and a really important part of sustainability in South Africa. Now Minister, in your various MEC roles, you have successfully championed many processes, one that led to the Sterkfontein being awarded Status of Old Heritage; you established three Metro Police structures during your tenure; you've established victim support centres at police stations; a one stop centre at a provincial level, Ikhaya le Themba - Home of Hope. For me these are causes that are worth fighting for....
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	And the first non-racial integrated human settlement called Cosmos City in Johannesburg, black and white, give-away, finance linked and bank subsidised human settlement that was never thethe first, post 1994 and none before 1994.
DR. MALKA	Those are significant achievements but they only typically materialise when someone like yourself steps in and draws her people around her to create something that wasn't there before. Can you please share the moment that led your start to champion these types of causes and then the moments afterwards, when you saw the effects on the people?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Life experience and partnership with people because the solutions must never be your solutions. It must be solutions for many others, and you must just be the champion towards the realisation of those solutions. Proper planning and ensuring that there is support from your peers working within a collective and allowing yourself to be guided by those who work with you also helps, but the most important thing is to also appreciate that change is paying. There are moments where you become very unpopular, there are moments where you become seriously under attack by those that you are coming to tamper with their comfort zone, but if you believe in a thing, and if you have a dream, allow yourself to realise that dream and what it requires, give yourself enough time, secondly look for the right people who can also become the messengers of what you want to realise so that you are not the only person who is the conveyor of the message. You must have one message and many voices that talk about it and when it occurs, don't own it, make it to become a societal success and your team success. Teamwork is the best but of importance, especially when you are a woman, find your niche and know what is your strength. My strength

	is being is about working together with other people, being able to compliment each other's strengths but most importantly never moving away from whatever I am determined to do at whatever cost.
DR. MALKA	You have incredible energy and focus on making your achievements and you're certainly familiar with breaking boundaries into new grounds and you've been committed to promoting women's enterprises, particularly in construction and housing, which is generally considered to be a male dominated field but by doing that you've sent a message to all women which says we can do everything and that takes a lot of strength to say and much more to act on, can you share with us some of your vision in that?
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	The thing, like I'm saying, you have to dream and locate your dream to what is the bigger picture. South Africa belongs to all those who live in it and we want to have an open, equal society and therefore you have to then say what is it, given the responsibility I have, I have to do and don't work on your personal legacy, work on legacies that are for generations to come so that when you pass the baton you don't pass something that people will not treasure and something that will not change people's lives. I do not want, at any point, to have any other woman, who will actually been a minor like I've seen my mother being a minor at home and my brother being the eldest one. Two, I will not also allow a situation whereas I've been given an opportunity I can actually not make an intervention in terms of protection of the rights of women and reducing their vulnerability in terms of what needs to be done. So, one of the things is about violence against women and children, we can stop it if I also get counted in dealing with it and amongst other things is to move away with, move away from a victim mentality and assert yourself. Education becomes important, skills become important, advocacy becomes important. The other thing that is quite important is that sometime, even if you have a dream, allow somebody to champion it and what is of importance is the realisation of the dream.
DR. MALKA	We will be right back after this.
	AD BREAK
DR. MALKA	You are listening to 'Womanity – Women in Unity' on Channel Africa, the voice of the African Renaissance, on frequency 9625 KHz, on the 31 meter band. Today we're talking to South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation, Miss Nomvula Mokonyane. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	Minister I know that we're starting to run out of time in our session today, in closing, during your career no matter what position that you have headed, you've done tremendous work concerning women's development, so in ending our discussion can you please use this platform to send a message of hope to all those women in the continent that due to circumstances gender equality may not be first on their agenda, but rather the daily struggle of taking care of their family, raising children, putting food on the table for them is a more pressurising reality.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	We're standing on the shoulders of giants who came before us, whose situations were much more worse than our situation, we honour them and I really honour those women whose time has not come for them to have what we believe is a free non-racial and a non-sexist society where there are victims civil wars, where there are victims of terrorism, where there are victims of abuse and so on, but what is of importance is that the world has got a number of women now who have taken the struggle of women to greater heights, both at the level of the United Nations, but

	<p>also in member countries. Struggles for women have become an integral part of policy but what is now of importance is that we've moved from policy to action. It may not have touched you today, but you know somebody that it has touched and therefore you must remain hopeful that it will not be in vain for you to be part of this cause. Be part of the change you want to see. Start with education, being part of a collective, sharing your information and being able to come and tell the policy makers, the decision makers about how you feel. Remember the story of the woman in Giyani who was raped three times, that made me to change gear on how government had to work because she said I am not going to stop and every time, every time one reflects on the work I do is to say I don't want to hear that story again and that's why I believe personification of this responsibility of water and sanitation drives me every day and makes me to seek more and more energy and humble myself with the team that I work with because it is only out of teamwork that we realise the successes. Wherever women are whether it's in Europe, whether it's in Africa, whether it's anywhere in the Middle East, every woman, every woman deserves peace and stability. Some of the things that happen are because we have delayed provision of peace and stability to women and affording women the lead.</p>
DR. MALKA	Minister thank you very much, it's been such a pleasure having you on the show today..
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Thank you very much.
DR. MALKA	...and we look forward to hearing more of the developments particularly the game changing scenarios on how increasingly water is going to be conscientised as a sustainable element.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Thank you very much and I wish the African girl child all the best. We've all gone through horrible life experiences it has to end with me, not with the next generation.
DR. MALKA	Thank you Minister.
MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE	Thank you.
	PROGRAMME END