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**PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY**

**GUEST NAME: MRS. ZAINAB HAWA BANGURA**

<b>SPEAKER</b>	<b>TRANSCRIPTION</b>
DR. MALKA (INTRODUCTION)	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 (GUEST SYNOPSIS)	Today it's the second show in our series of discussions from the 25th African Union Summit, held in Johannesburg, South Africa where Heads of State and Government of the 54 member states of the African Union congregated. This year's summit was held under the theme, Women's Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063, which is a fifty year framework that sets Africa on the path to achieving integration, prosperity and peace. The Assembly adopted a declaration on 2015, year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063 which includes commitments to improve women's contribution and benefits from formal agriculture and agribusiness value chains, to enhance women's access to health, to push forward Women's Economic Empowerment, to enhance the agenda on women, peace and security, to improve women's participation in governance, to increase women and girl's access to education, science and technology. Today we're talking to Mrs. Zanib Hawa Bamdura, the United Nations Under Secretary-General Special Representative on sexual violence in conflict. Prior to this appointment she served as Minister of Health and Sanitation in Sierre Leone as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs in Sierre Leone. Welcome to the show.
<b>MS. BANDURA</b>	<b>Thank you very much.</b>
DR. MALKA	Madam Undersecretary, can you please share with us a few of the landmarks in your career and when you understood that serving your country was a big part of your destiny?
<b>MS. BANDURA</b>	<b>I think it started first and foremost when I actually was able to graduate from the university and my mother or let me say my parents who were both illiterate they never went to school and I actually come from an extremely poor background, went to school barefoot, you know I sometimes went to bed without food on an empty stomach and my parents were never able to build their own house. We were being kicked from home to home because my parents couldn't pay the rent but my mother always instilled in me that the only thing that can lift you out of this poverty and make you somebody, is to have an education. So I think first the highlights was me graduating from university. The second was when I actually led a demonstration in my country to get the military back into the barracks after three decades of one party run military leadership and I think that's changed my destiny because then I realized I have a role in government. So once I was able to have the military organised so successful handing over to the civilian government for the first time in three decades, my life changed. I left my profession as an insurance executive, I decided to work in making sure that we have human rights</b>

	<p>and changing our Constitution, we have the rule of law, we have good governance and the centre of it is actually the empowerment of women, that's the changing aspect. Of course at the end, after a couple of years, after several invitations to join government I was made the Minister of Foreign Affairs and in that position I saw myself as the voice and the face of my country. So my job was to sell my country, was to change the dynamic the narrative of my country so there and then I knew that I was destined to do something bigger.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And Madam I read that in 1994 you started Women Organised for Morally Enlightened Nation Women, can you tell us a little bit about that?</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>You know I always have this philosophy, I said at the banquet table there are no reserved seats. That's my philosophy in life that as a woman you don't have to wait to be called. Women have the tendency if they walk into the room they sit on the side-line, men sit right in front and they become the centre of attention, we're very shy, so for me rule number one, you're not invited to the table you have to sit, rule number two you don't sit on the periphery and rule number three, do not wait to asked to talk, you make your points and I grew up with saying that I have to say what I think is the right thing. I have to say it in the right place at the right time and so my idea was to mobilise women to believe that you have to come together to change the country. So it was that organisation that led the campaign for democracy in my country because we came to the realisation that we had lots of problems with women's rights because women's rights were enshrined in traditional law, in customary law you know so inheritance laws, property rights and rights to children, everything were actually dictated by those laws not by the Statute laws and so I said we will not fight for our rights if we don't have democracy, not within a military government so we decided to fight to have democracy and be part of the process of democratisation so to be able to make sure all our rights are enshrined in the new Constitution, in the new laws actually developed in the country in the aftermath of day, I don't want to call it a revolution because what's inside a revolution, it's just fighting for democracy.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And Madam Undersecretary you raised a very important point in terms of fighting for women's rights, to ensure that everyone has equality in the country and in your current role as UN Undersecretary for sexual violence in conflict, one of the areas that I find in this role and obviously this is your role, that if potentially you're putting the face of conflict where you have culture, tradition and religion all intertwined together, how do you think that we can find a silver lining to benefit women so that they can move forwards?</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>I think the wall has moved very fast because we have international laws and I think the biggest challenge we have is how do we translate the UN resolutions into solutions on the ground because the United Nations Security Council has actually developed framework, ground breaking that decides that, one you have to respect women in peace and get them involved in peace building and peace making and put them on the table and the issue of conflict through let's say sexual violence is an international peace and security issue. Sexual violence is a war crime and so all of the resolutions that have been enacted, adopted at the Security Council, how do we change them, make them into solutions on the ground? So my job is going into countries looking at their legal</p>

	<p>framework and saying okay rape is not so well, what do we do? So I have a team, I call the team of experts in sexual violence and the rule of law. They help and work with countries to change the laws. We don't want to change the laws, we train the police because in domestic violence the police is very key because they must be able to investigate, they must be able to keep the evidence, collect it, keep it, protect the evidence and protect the victim so it's a whole chain of interaction so that's what we do country to country. So now as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Secretary for Violence in Conflict, after all the adaptation of all of the Security Council Resolution which has been accepted by every country in the world, my job is to move from country to country, where the problems are, working with the military sometimes, working with the police, working with the judges, working with the Parliamentarians, and getting the Presidents at the highest level to understand that this is what you need to do and him as a Head of State to change the perception and that's what we're doing. So we have succeeded in countries like the DRC, we are working in South Sudan, we are working in Somalia, we are working in Central African Republic, we are working in Cote d'Ivoire we are working in Mali and because my mandate is global I also work around the world. I work in Columbia, I work in Bosnia, I work in the Middle East. I just came back from a visit from the Middle East, which covers Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon. So that's the challenge we do so until you get them to accept that they are part of the global, the global chain and they need to be able to respect the agreement, they have agreed at the international level.</p>
<p>DR . MALKA 8.25</p>	<p>And two points that come to mind in terms of what you're saying: one, that frequently rape is almost used as a tool of warfare in conflict countries and all of those countries you mentioned are conflict countries and the second element is that sometimes there's an understanding of what constitutes rape, of what constitutes attitudes and treatments of women of what the norms are in those particular countries.</p>
<p>MS. BANDURA</p>	<p>For me rape is a crime and that's period. So it takes a various, sexual violence takes various forms of sex, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced sterilisation, there are a whole series of crimes related to sexual violence and the important issue is to educate the government. The government to accept them and to enshrine them in their laws and that you can say is a domestic issue but that's the biggest challenge we have. So as I said we have this team who go for example in the Colombia where we work, it's part of the Constitution. We tried to change the penal code, we also work with the judiciaries so to able to make sure some of the decisions they take in the court really reflects that action. For example in Colombia the most progressive aspects of the government is the judiciary so it's a issue that has to be addressed by everybody, it also has to be seen as a moral issue. The religious leaders have a role to play because at the end of the day, for me the biggest challenge I say, how can someone rape a three month old baby, how can somebody rape a six month old baby? So society has to understand this is a societal problem and all of us have to come together to deal with it.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>It's curing the moral fabric and looking at it from an education point of view, we've got the one aspect from government but we also have the education of our population and I found that education is a vital source of empowerment to</p>

	<p>empower individuals, to empower societies but particularly for women and I know that even basic levels of education, there has been various studies by UNESCO, United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation which show that benefits include greater control over fertility rates, reduced child mortality, improved health management and an additional year of schooling equates to a 10% increase in earnings. Now given all of your experience both in the continent and across the globe, do you think we're doing enough to educate our women about these issues?</p>
<p><b>MS. BANDURA</b></p>	<p><b>No, I'm sorry, I'm afraid not enough. I think we still have a lot of work to do and that's where the job where in the Resolution 2106, we actually made sure we included the protection of women leaders NGO's. I think the rule that women who are in the front line, especially women organisers, you know women rights defenders, it's extremely important because the more vulnerable women become the more difficult it is for other women to join. So we have to do everything to protect women, I think we have to start the education at the elementary level in schools, the teachers have a responsibility, the media have a responsibility so this is not an issue that goes away suddenly in a country. I have seen it in my own country where I come from, Sierra Leone. You have to bring everybody together because it's not only a issue, a women's rights issue, it's a development issue, it's a health issue, it's a security issue so if we look at it from that broader perspective then we can understand that this is something that is very fundamental, it not only destroyed the individual, it's also destroyed the family, it's also a crime against the community.</b></p>
<p><b>AD BREAK</b></p>	
<p><b>DR. MALKA</b></p>	<p>Undersecretary you spoke briefly on your forums today, in terms of the personal transformation that you've witnessed in your country but also through from yourself within your own generation and one of the questions that I put to all my guests who have made tremendous achievements is to understand some of those factors of success that have led to them becoming the women that they are today. So if you could please share with us what have been some of the key drivers of your success and some of the pivotal moments in your life when you were growing up and what influenced you the most?</p>
<p><b>MS. BANDURA</b></p>	<p><b>To me I say the greatest influence of my life and the driver in my life was my mother. My father was a Muslim Cleric, my mother was illiterate. I was an only child to my mom and my father found it extremely difficult to have a wife who can only have one child and who is a girl because he believes that I have to get married. So at some point in our life, I was twelve years old when my father decided that I needed to get married to drop out of school. My mom said no, my father said well you have to make a choice, your marriage or your daughter's education. My mother made the choice so my father kicked us out, we left and we went to my mother's village. My mother sold everything she had to get me an education and even when opportunities came to her, to support her to get her to do business, she said I'll use that money to educate my child because I know when she's educated she will change my life and that inspiration by my mother was actually what drove me to become what I am and today every part of my life, everywhere I go, when I celebrate my success, I celebrate the strength of my mother so this is why I believe in the power of women, it's my mother that changed my life. My mother took the decision that I</b></p>

	<p>have to have an education, you know, so at the most difficult time she sacrificed everything, she sacrificed her own marriage, she sacrificed her own happiness, she sacrificed her own luxuries because she wanted to give me an education and I think if every mother in Africa makes it a matter of priority that my daughter has to go to school and she will get the best education. So that inspiration kept me in class, made sure I was top of my class and got me everywhere I go so for me fighting for women's rights is part of my DNA. I was discriminated against before I was born and I saw discrimination throughout my life and my mother said to me, don't feel, wherever you go don't be afraid to say what you have to say, don't be afraid to say the truth as long as you are sure and you don't have to follow all the people you just have to convince yourself. So I grew up with a philosophy that failure is not an option, it is not in my vocabulary, whatever I do, wherever I find myself I have to be the best and that has kept me going and has kept me doing all the things I need to do in my life.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Your mother sounded like the most inspirational, incredible woman. Undersecretary, you have held numerous positions, high roles within your country and you have ultimately become a role model for many young women proving that with hard work and personal sacrifice that everything can be achieved. Can you please share with us some of the gender challenges that you've experienced and have overcome during your career?</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>You know I grew up in a country where the laws were against us as women and in almost all of the positions I took I was like the first person to be there. Even in government when I was in cabinet at one point I was the only woman. It was extremely difficult but every time I sit in that position I don't see myself as an individual, I see myself as a woman representing women and I said to myself if I fail the women have failed. If I succeed everybody will respect women so I got to those positions to make sure I succeed and I don't go into those seats as going to think about gender issue I go there as an individual that is at par with all of the women. It's not very easy I have to tell you because people discriminate against you, they see you first and foremost as a woman, a pretty face that has come to call the number and I always said to people I go into any job, into any meeting with a lot of confidence and I work before I get there and I think my message towards women, if you are put in a position of authority and you sit there with men always make sure your are prepared, always make sure you are prepared, you do your homework to the best of your ability because they always see you as a woman, they don't see you as an equal but when you open your mouth and you engage them and you put on the table issues that they have not thought about, believe me they will leave that meeting with so much respect for you and they will come back to you. But if you think because I'm a woman so they will give me preference and I just sit there and I say anything I say, then you have to realise that you're losing that position for all of the women after you. So for you to be able to give other opportunities to women you have to excel beyond anybody's understanding and that's where those men who are sitting with you on that table will end up respecting any women they see.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And that leads me to another point which I think is very important where the working world in effect has been designed around what I term as man's hours, the tradition role of nine to five but it really doesn't take into context the work</p>

	<p>that women do and often I think in a way we're almost losing half of the world's best multitaskers because at the same time a woman is trying to manage her traditional expectations, attending to the home, trying to have a career, develop her business and her timetable is just not structured appropriately. What are your perspectives of this and do you think that in the 21st century it's about time that something was done in order to restructure and accommodate women's multiple roles?</p>
<p><b>MS. BANDURA</b></p>	<p><b>It's very interesting, you know one of the people I'm working with presently to address this issue is the Prime Minister of Japan and he realized a few years ago that the economy of Japan was not going to grow at the pace he wants it, if he doesn't bring more women into the work force. The women of Japan are some of the most educated women around the world but they're being forced to make a choice to either stay at home or take a career and more and more women are taking the option of staying home and having children. So if you actually take a career you will not be able to have a family and he realized that if he doesn't change the law and the attitude Japan will not continue to progress. So he came with a decision that he's going to change the culture and the way people think and he had a first conference last year, wow he's going to have the second one this year in August in Japan. Basically, he brought women from all over the world who are high achievers like the Managing Director of the IMF, Cherie Blair, and lots of women to come and share their experience with the Japanese women and he found out that you also need to support the women. He's building over 400 daycare facilities, he's forcing all companies in the Stock Exchange in Japan to have women in the Board, to sit. You are right, we are forced to make difficult choice and what we have done as women we have worked very hard to be included in decision making processes while we have not left some of the stereotype responsibility, bringing up children, taking care of the home. I think it's less with each individual family to deal with it. I see husbands as partners as friends and I think when you make the choice to get married you have to understand that you have to share the responsibility and I know what you're saying because I remember in the hearts of my profession I give you one typical example, my son was performing in a play and I was travelling back home and he said to me, I want you to be there. I flew straight from the airport, my son was climbing up the stage, he had not seen me I came and sat right in front, he turned around and I'll tell you the smile I saw on his face I will never be able to pay for that smile and when he was taking his exams in high school, his final exams he said to me three months before the exam, he said Mommy, I want you to be with me during the time. I cancelled all my engagements for a month. I stayed home with him, worked with him in the papers, encouraged him and supported him to take the exams but I couldn't of done that if I didn't have a husband who understood and I think that's what we women, we fight so much in being the top of our ... we forget that we are also human beings, that's why also mothers and we have to encourage institutions and government to give that time to that flexibility, you know for me I think when I was Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as Minister of Health I encourage women, I supports them I ask them how their family, I mean I had a staff who was under so much pressure, so much pressure, she was a single mother but she was dating somebody. She would come home, she would come to the office very stressed, very tired and exhausted and one</b></p>

	<p>day I sat her down and she burst out crying, I said listen you have to decide, I do not support any mother who sacrifice her child for her profession but I think we can balance it. We tend to take too much responsibility on our own, we refuse to have our partners to share with, we believe we are the only person who have the answers.</p>
DR . MALKA	<p>I heard a wonderful expression the other day where someone said we have a superwoman complex.</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>Exactly. I agree with you and I think that's what we have to do. We have to realise we are also human being you know we are people, we need to ask, women are free to ask for help, when they can't make it they're afraid to talk job because they don't want people to criticize them and I think this is what we need to do, we need to ask other people for help when we know we cannot, we need to talk to our partners, we need them to engage, we don't take the responsibility, we sit, we have to go the children's school, we have to go to the bookshop to buy their books, we have to, no. We should also ask our partners to work with us and support us, and I think that's what we need to do, so I think we can balance it if you really know how to balance it. For me you need to be able to accept that, you cannot do everything, we are just human beings. You know even with generators I always say, I compare that they break down so if not you have a mental breakdown so it is important for us to realise that.</p>
DR . MALKA	<p>I think that you're absolutely right. We have to have those enabling factors in our lives, in our environments to make everything work the way that we want it to. We'll take a short break.</p>
<p><b>AD BREAK</b></p>	
DR. MALKA 24.55	<p>You spoke briefly about having the leaders in Japan and I recall a conversation with Christine Lagarde when she was talking about exactly the elements that were happening in Japan that they have an ageing culture, that they need to increase ...</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p><b>Ageing population.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>... ja, ageing population and this whole initiative of looking at women in a different perspective and I think in one of those conversations they had, the First Lady speak which again was something that Japanese cultural wasn't familiar with by having women there.</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>I was at a meeting with Christine Lagarde and I think it was important and the way that that programme was managed because was to bring Cherie Blair who had been a First Lady in the UK, who actually had sued her husband's government and who made sure the husband actually partake in babysitting so when she had her last son the husband had to cut down his hours of work as Prime Minister. So she was on the stage explaining this and the wife of the Prime Minister of Japan had to talk about her own experience when they go on vacation, how the husband had to take the dustbin out, how he had to take the meals, and prepare some of the food and I, listen you consider shock in the eyes of all those CEOs of the big companies in Japan they were like what, is that what the Prime Minister is doing, you know and I think it's important for them to see that it actually could be done, that they need to support their wives you know</p>

	<p>and I think that has changed, it really made things change because I was told by some of the women in Japan that when this woman started playing a very high profile role as First Lady there was a lot of criticism because they're used to having the wife, they never call them the First Lady. The wife of the Prime Minister of Japan stay in the house so nobody sees her, but you know this one has said no way. So she is being a role model for the Japanese women, so a lot of Japanese women respect her and Prime Minister Abe has appointed more women in government positions as cabinet ministers than any other Prime Minister in Japan. So he's leading the fight for the empowerment of women, he's putting he's not only talking about it, in Japan he's spending three billion and in the rest of the world, total with what they paying the rest of the world is six billion for the empowerment of women because he believes in it. So what so what that says also, you have to have men who believe in it, who will support the fight. The last fifty years we've been talking to ourselves. It's high time we have more men like the President of Ruanda, like the President of Kenya who will change the laws and implement it and take the necessary action and I think that that will start changing things for us.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you for that. I think that's very enlightening and keeping with the whole theme of leadership, building female leadership capacity is critically important for the future of women in our continent, for the future of women across the globe. As a woman who constantly works hard to succeed or should I say twice as hard than men, how do you see female leadership in the continent, in Africa?</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>I think it's coming up you know you have more and more women as Foreign Ministers, you have more women in Parliament, you have more women in Cabinet. I think it's going to come home although as I, as Mrs Zuma was saying, the rate at it is going has taken us eighty years so get where we went to so we really need to double, this is the reason why I'm sure Mrs Zuma decided to actually have this year as the Year of Women in Africa because that's where it's highlight, it gets also focus on the issue, it gets also development plan, action plan. It gets also think, these are the goals we want to achieve, how do we get there, what are the things that we put in place to be able to make sure we get the goal, so I think the more we concentrate the more we work on it the better it becomes or the more women that you have in leadership position the more there will be is inspiration to other women. So I think we're going very well, we're doing extremely well but we have to do much more.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And from an African perspective I recently heard in terms of the inter-Parliamentary Union from a South African point of view, South Africa is ranked seventh in the world but Rwanda and Senegal hold first and sixth positions respectively yet leading countries in, well so-called leading countries, First World Nations, the U.S.A seventy second, the UK fifty eighth, France forty-fourth and it makes me wonder how can such a low representation of women be permitted and still occur in those environments? What's your point of view?</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>Well it just tells that we're doing a lot of things better than most of those countries and we should be proud as Africans but we're not telling our own story. I think that is what is important. We always had women leaders in Africa in the home, in the family, in the community but we have</p>

	<p>never documented it, we've not respected it instead we think more about Presidents, Prime Ministers and I think once we are able to use that knowledge and experience to actually influence the political and you'll see how Africa is moving forward. We have to tell our own story, we have a lot of things in which as I said in the discussion I was having this afternoon that even in the are of sexual violence Africa has done more than any other continent but we have not been able to tell that story, that's what we need to do and then people will start pointing fingers at us, to learn from us, they need to learn from us, we have things that we have done that these countries needs to learn from us, for me that's the only explanation I have.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And when we're looking at telling our own story would you put that from a point of view of media, of increased communications so that women are appropriately represented in the media and projected to the rest of the public.</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>I think you have said it. I can't say it better than you have. We have to use modern technology, we have to use the media, we have to tell our own story, use all the social media, the tools that have been developed to tell stories, we have to do it. We can't wait. The African is very, I don't want to say timid, is very shy, we are not people who think that when I say too much about myself it means, I'm singing my own praise and we're very humble as Africans, we want people to see us and appreciate us and acknowledge what we have done and that has to change.</p>
<p><b>AD BREAK</b></p>	
DR . MALKA	<p>Undersecretary, we're coming to the end of our discussion and I'd like it if in closing the conversation if you could please use this platform to send a message of hope to all the women in the continent that are listening that due to circumstances gender equality might not be first on their agenda but more in terms of priority would be taking care of the family, putting food on the table would be a more pressurizing reality.</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p>I think all I can say to most women is that they have to think about themselves first, you know you think about a woman when she cooks she thinks about other people eating, when she wakes up in the morning she thinks, what do I give my child to go to school, what does my husband take for lunch. Women always put herself first, sorry puts others first, if you transferred that into policy making what a better society it would be. We always talk about peace negotiation, we always talk about all of those things, we always talk about designing policy but because the people who are sitting there on the table who are making because all the decision making people are men, they think about themselves first, a woman has quality of nurturing, quality of care, these are qualities that are missing in governance, in society. African society today or the world generally has a morality crisis. The more women you have in positions of power the more the society benefits from the qualities we as women are bringing to that society. We see Rwanda, we see a lot of other countries so may I say to women, you have to be part of the story. You have to be there on the table, you have to educate your children because the more educated a woman is the more independent decisions she makes, economically, politically and when a woman has a source of income she brings 90% of it home to her family. Any increase in income to an African woman means a better standard of living for her family. You educate a woman you educate a</p>

	<p><b>nation, you educate a man you educate an individual. So anywhere you look around, anything you think about that makes a nation better as society, those qualities you get from women. So I think we as women should not be feeling sorry for ourselves, we are not victims, we are agents of change and we must make the change in our family, in our community, in our village, in our countries and in the continent of African.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you very much, Undersecretary, I think that's a vital message that we' are agents of change, we're responsible for our own destiny, we're responsible for the future of our children. It's been a pleasure having you join us today and we wish you all the best in the future.</p>
MS. BANDURA	<p><b>Thank you very much.</b></p>
<p><b>END PROGRAM</b></p>	