

PROGRAM DATE: 2015-07-16

PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: PROF. NKANDU LUO

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
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)	Joining us today at the 25 th African Union Summit hosted in Sandton under the theme of 2015 Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063. We are joined by Zambian Minister of Gender and Child Development Professor Nkandu Luo. Welcome Professor.
GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO	Well thank you very much and I really feel honoured and privileged to appear on your show.
DR. MALKA	Professor Luo, how has the conference fulfilled your expectations?
GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO	The theme this year is the Empowerment of an African Woman and personally I think it has been long overdue. I wish we had done it a long time ago because African women have continued to be marginalized, to be side lined and now that the heads of state have seen the importance and the need to ensure that women are empowered, then it brings a very exciting moment for people like myself who have spent a lot of years trying to fight for women's recognition. So I was very excited also to be party to this AU meeting. The other exciting bit about it is that when we met as Ministers of Gender to isolate one particular activity that we think we can explore and get benefits out, we were all so resolved that a time has come for women's emancipation. And we chose to deal with issue of agri business because a lot of our women all over the country, the majority live in rural areas and one of their mainstay, is that of agriculture. We think that if we invest in that, would have helped a lot of women.
DR. MALKA	And I understand – some literature that I read previously, that the aim of the AU is trying to have 30% land ownership amongst women. Is that still the case?
GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO	Yes, that is still the case. In fact in my own country Zambia, a directive has been issued to the Minister of Lands and the Minister of Local Government and Housing that are responsible for land, to ensure that 30% of the land is found in the hands of women. So that is true and we are working towards that. What I must say though, is that while I think at our level we are resolved that that is what we want to do, we also need to put up a very robust campaign to get this information to our women so that the women can claim their space and be able to demand this land and if they already have it, to ensure that it is protected by getting title to it. That is the only way that we are going to empower women.
DR. MALKA	And Minister in terms of achieving that, do you see that from an education point of view or from a communication line?
GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO	Well I think both. What we have done for example in my ministry to be able to achieve this is to restructure the ministry in such a way that we put up a robust communication unit as part of our planning unit. So we will be calling our planning unit as Planning and Communication Unit Directorate, so that we are

	able to develop communication strategies that reach our – even the lowest unit where we can't find women so that women are informed on where and how and what to do. So that's on one hand. The other hand is, we think we can also use the educational structures such as even schools so that the young women that are found in schools, know about this. We can also use our popular theatres to be going out into the community and getting the people informed and so on and so on. For the educated people like myself, it will be easy because they have access to television and all sorts of things that can inform them. But for the ordinary person out there, we need to do a bit more.
DR. MALKA	And Minister, staying with the element of education; education is a vital tool to empower individuals and societies and even basic levels of literacy and numeracy have shown to have profound benefits on the well-being of women, how they look after their children so whether it is about access to health, looking at issues of fertility. And I know that UNESCO had said that an additional year of schooling yields a 10% increase on earnings. In your opinion, do you think we are passing on enough knowledge or doing things more effectively that information is passed from mothers to daughters in ensuring that people are aware of their rights and what their education opportunities are?
GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO	In fact if you look at the Zambian structure of government, the Ministry of Health was split. There was a new ministry that was created known as the Ministry for Community - Mother and Child Health. Now one of the functions and activities of this ministry was to recreate the community halls that we used to have in the past. The mothers and their children used to use these as one, a recreation centre, two as an educational centre so those women who didn't go to school, they could do their literacy classes and there were different people who would go there and sit with them and even give them – upskill them in certain skills that they didn't have, for example they used to have Home Craft so the women were upskilled in cooking and some of them would use this skill to start making some fritters to sell, they upskilled them in things like knitting and tailoring. And the directive was given to the Minister of Community – Mother and Child Health, to rekindle these community halls. So I think that is want vehicle that we can use in terms of getting information out there, not only to the women but also to the children. Because this is a facility for all the children and the mothers. But also the Ministry of Gender, before I left I had a meeting with my colleagues of the Minister of Youth and Sport, the Minister of Local Government for us to repossess our play parks. Because in the play parks also which we used to run before, we actually had a lot of educational activities apart from just the sporting activities and other activities – we also had a lot of educational activities that some of them even empowered young people to know for example things like gardening, you know how to tender for flowers and all sorts of things like that. So these are some of the initiatives that we are thinking we can use, to uplift the knowledge of our people in the country and in turn they can use this knowledge to advance themselves.
DR. MALKA	I think those are very important aspects to empower and to promote entrepreneurship. We will take a short break.
AD BREAK	
DR. MALKA	Today we are talking to Professor Nkanda Luo Minister of Gender and Child Development for Zambia, from the 25 th African Union Summit in Johannesburg South Africa. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter @womanitytalk. Minister in your capacity now as responsible for gender and child development, are there any specific milestones that you want to achieve in this term?
GUEST NAME	Ja, I have two things. One is the fight that I am the Minister of Gender and

<p>PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Child Development, I have insisted that my title is used in full for the simple reason that you cannot go to a horse and force it to drink. So if we focus on just gender and the empowerment at that level, we will not achieve the desired results. So I would like to start – whilst I am battling with the adults, I would like to start programs with the young children, so that as they are forming their character, they are grounding themselves. First of all even to be better people when they grow up because then they will have respect for women and then all the issues we are talking about: defilements, sexual abuse and other types of gender based violence will be minimized. We have various programs that we are doing with the children. First of all and one of the other reasons I am repossessing play parks is that I just want to give the children the right to play. Because just playing, develops a child. The second thing is that I want to work closely with my colleague in education, who has been tasked with early education activities because again the earlier you ground the children and expose them to education, the better. The third thing I'm introducing in the ministry is a program called Boys to Men. This program is supposed to start in inculcating in the heads of young people about the fact that they are not superior to women, that a girl child and a boy child are equal in the eyes of God and there are things that the boy can do and there are things that the girl can't do but overall, a boy can cook, a boy can make a bed, a boy can sweep and so on. Maybe the only thing that a boy cannot do, is to get pregnant and deliver a child. So I want as these children are developing, these boys, they are going to respect women so we will not see some of the vices that we are seeing at this age. I shall be launching this program soon and I have already raised the necessary funds for this particular program. The other program that I am going to launch soon, maybe about the same time is a program that is called Women at Work or Girls at Work. This program will be a mentorship program. So what it is that, I would like the girls, as they grow, they don't only think that their ultimate is to get married and that their ultimate is to get pregnant. But to start admiring women who have made it. So we are going to identify institutions where there are women who have excelled, who are admired and to place them to work in those institutions.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>And Minister this is the whole purpose of the show, it is about being able to inspire young ladies to say that there is so much more in life.</p>
<p>GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Exactly. And you know what may happen if I went and said I want to launch this program in Zambia, maybe those places will say we don't have the salary for them. So we have raised the salary. So all I would want is a space, get the girls there, get them mentored, come out with self-esteem and assertiveness and love for themselves. Because you have to love yourself to succeed in life. And know that there is so much that you can do, and that you can't be limited. And then we will be providing the salary for those girls. The other one is where we are going to link women to young people to businesses. That way those who may not make it to university they will have the fall back to know that if I can't make it at university and I am good with my hands, for example I may be good at flowers, I can become a good florist and earn a living and even become big and I don't want to end that these little efforts here and there, no. So that's a third program that will be launching. The fourth one is the Women's Bank and I intend to announce that by September, so that the women can have access to resources which are user-friendly. And we are working around the clock on that with my permanent secretary, and I am hoping that by September I can announce that program. And I think that is enough for 2015; however I am working on other programs. I have decided that I will stop using the word "empowerment" I will be using a word, in describing some of the work that we shall be doing as high impact now. I had an eleven day tour in some parts of</p>

Zambia and I was mobilising women to say look “Let us do something big, let us stop this thing of feeling sorry for ourselves and every time saying we are poor, we don’t have anything”. And I said: “All the resources are sitting in the rural part of Zambia”. What we need to do is to look at them, and see how we can translate them into wealth. The examples I was giving them are things like a tree. I said whenever you see a tree all you see is charcoal. You must go and burn charcoal. And by the time you are finishing cutting the trees, you have been bitten by snakes, by the time you start carrying the loads to go and burn them you would have maybe sweated so much and then at the end of the day in a sack of charcoal all you earn is ten kwacha. But if you looked at a tree differently, first of all appreciate the air that you breathe comes from the tree, you won’t cut it. Secondly you can put bee-hives in those trees, knowing very well that after a few months you will be harvesting honey and you will be selling honey and you will have money. The other thing you can do which is a little much more evolving, you can make pencils from that tree. You can make rulers from the tree, you can make furniture from the tree, you can make doors from the tree. The sky is the limit. Just the one tree and there are no trees is Lusaka, the trees are where? In the rural part of Zambia. The water you don’t even need to know much, all you need is to just start bottling because we have springs all over the country. You can start bottling. Everybody now is drinking bottled water. I mean wherever you look in the rural Zambia, you see all these springs all over the place. But we are not thinking outside the box and until Africa starts thinking outside the box, we are in trouble. But we have so much resource that you know the sky would be the limit. We have for example now, a lot of construction going on in Zambia. Zambia is like a construction site, there are houses being constructed, there are roads being constructed, sideways being paved, drainage has been created – why don’t we go and own quarries? Put in some machines and start quarrying and start providing the stones to the contractors of roads and the pay is good from them. So these are things that we can do. So I went around mobilizing and also getting them to think twice about the decisions they make. One of the examples I used is the cultivation of crops. I said every one of you when you think about cultivation, you think about maize. Now I have told them that you stop and think. If I brought you a tractor which I intend to do, it’s in target that’s the high impact now. Nobody will be cultivating with a hoe. The money that I am given for empowerment, I am going to buy tractors for selected places. Now if I have ten hectares of land, I give to one group of women, another ten hectares I give to this group of women, we put in the tractors, they cultivate and cultivate. After that we go to plant, the ones with the cassava, plant. The ones with the maize they plant. The ones with cassava, they will go and sit down but the ones with maize they will start looking for decompound. Now in costing, you cost the land, then come and cost the labour for the tractor and the diesel whereas the cassava people will not be costing anything, the people with maize will be now costing for fertilizer, they will be costing for time and they will be costing for labour. Then they will go back, the two groups to go and weed. After weeding, the cassava people will come and sit down. The ones for maize now will be looking for top dressing. So they will be costing for top dressing, they will again cost for labour and they will cost for time. When these crops are ready, the maize can only produce at the most (even if you are a good farmer) only three cobs whereas the tubers that are in the cassava they can even have up to twenty. And you find you can take some, cover it and it will produce more. So in terms of value chain, you actually have a product that has more value and that has a much more wider market. But because we have decided to politicise maize, we are producing a product that at the end of the day by the time they come and buy your maize, you have made your losses. So this is the mobilization I was doing around the country to

	<p>get the women to start having what I call a paradigm shift and a change of mind set, to start first of all thinking big, secondly to be thinking outside of the box. But I have also told them that when I bring you this implements or money for whatever you want to do, we will not just give you those things. We have to upskill you. So we are going to partner with the Ministry of Agriculture, to go and upskill them in whatever they want to do, whether it's animals they will be keeping, whether it will be crops, whether it will be fish farming, bee keeping or whatever. And secondly, I would like them to be trained in financial management and savings. So that even if it is a hard day, if the money has gone to be banked it has gone to be banked. And you can't start spending money before you have banked it. You first collect it, bank it. At the moment if somebody comes home, "Oh so and so has come home, oh, take a bit go and buy coca cola, I'm coming" you know that kind of thing. So we need to get the women to be upskilled so we working with colleagues in the financial institutions that will help us in terms of upskilling women in all that. So those are some of the things that I am hoping come next year, they will be my legacy in the Ministry of Gender and Child Development. But there are many other things that I am doing, which already I am sure you probably have read about them, the Child Marriage campaign, that was my baby. The HIV programs in Zambia literally every program has my hands, so I will just be building onto my cv.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Minister it sounds like an incredible legacy and it also sounds in terms of the work that you are doing, that there is such deep integration across all ministries to make sure that everything works holistically. Because the reality is it is not a case of something happening in isolation, everything is integrated and needs to work like that.</p>
<p>GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Exactly and in fact that is the way that we should learn to work in our governments in Africa. There's none of us who is omnipotent. We just have to work together and we have to learn that culture. So what I normally do when I think of an idea, I see which ministries can work with me, then I call my colleagues, we sit and if they also have an idea they think I can contribute, they call me we go and sit. For me that is my modus operandi. Nothing less, nothing more.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And Minister that talks a lot about your leadership and I consider that building female leadership capacity is vital not only for women in any particular country, but for the future of women across the continent. And as a woman who constantly works hard to succeed or shall I say twice or even three times as hard to succeed, how do you see female leadership in Africa?</p>
<p>GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Well I think there is a lot of realization at the moment even when I go around the country in Zambia and also the continent, there is a realization that a space must be created for female leaders. Increasingly in fact I hear the President of the Republic of Zambia speak very positively that you know if you empower a woman, there is likely to be more fruits and so on. Even in terms of how the structure of our government has been although there weren't many of us that made it to parliament - out of a parliament of 158 people, we only have 21, but we are lucky to have women that are being appointed to position of decision making in their fields, such as the Judiciary, such as the Police, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Drug Enforcement Commission, National Assembly and so on. That I think for me is a step in the right direction and I think the more we make a case and the more we show that we are able to lead differently, I think a lot of people will get sowed on to the idea of having more women in leadership. Our leadership has not been seen and because of that, unless people see you, they will not appreciate you. In fact I announced this</p>

	<p>year, at the women’s celebrations that this is the last time Zambia is going to be marching. I would like the next celebrations next year for women to showcase who they are. Now we have so many doctors, I would like them to run a clinic for a week as women, just to showcase how many women in Zambia are doctors at the moment. And how many have even gone beyond the seven years are now paediatricians, they are surgeons – I would like them to carry out operations on that day on the 8th of March. How many now are epidemiologists, how many are what. I think we need to showcase who we are. I would like to see women engineers put up a stall to show the different engineering activities they have done – if they are mining engineers, if they are civil engineers, and so on. So that is the way we intend to do the Zambian celebrations next year, we will put up what I call a carnival to show case the existence of women and who we are. And those who are in politics obviously will have a political corner to try and talk to people, because a lot of people don’t want to join politics because you know you have to be thick skinned anyway to be there. So a lot of them don’t want to join so we want to be able to speak to them. So have a stand where we can entice a lot more women. We are going to elections next year, so that more women can come and run.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>I think that is important. Although you need to have a thick skin for politics, that is where the policies happen, that is where the rights, the regulations are passed down. If things are not working at the top, it won’t work at the bottom.</p>
<p>GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Yes, that is why we need to you know entice a lot more women to join, because when they hear the kind of names they call us, the mudslinging whatever, they just get frightened. But we need to talk to them and just tell them that – I mean I won’t die for being called stupid, I won’t die for being called a name. I am still Professor Luo and I tell people they can gossip about me as much as they wish, which they do. They will not take it away from me, even as I go down six feet, they will be saying: “Today we are burying Professor Nkanda Luo full stop”. And I am me and those who didn’t have time to get to where others are, they should just keep quiet or go back to school because even as I am here, I am a registered student at the University of Zambia School of Medicine, I am doing Masters of Public Health. Why should anybody be jealous? They must just go back to school because you can go to university as late in your life. So that is what a lot of women are scared of. So those of us who are there, need to put them in and say look even me I get insulted but if I’m not stupid, I’m not stupid. If I am not a dog, I will not become a dog. I am Professor Nkanda Luo so that’s the attitude. So we have to help other women to come in and you know when we are many, even those who call us names will stop calling us names. Because then they will be so many of us, how many can you give names? Even those who gossip about us, they will stop. How many are you going to gossip about? Ja, and if someone says anything that I think I didn’t do, I just write a letter and say look, or I call them and say what you are saying is not true. And you move on, have a thick skin.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Professor Luo, thank you for those words of wisdom. We will be right back after this.</p>
AD BREAK	
DR. MALKA	<p>Today we are talking to Professor Nkanda Luo, Minister of Gender and Child Development for Zambia. From the 25th African Union Summit hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter @Womanitytalk. Going on to a more personal level, one of the questions that I ask all of my guests on this program is about the factors that they consider to have contributed to their success. Whether it is through hard work, whether it is through perseverance, discipline. Could you please share with us some of the factors that you</p>

	think have contributed to your success?
GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO	<p>I think the first one is mentorship. That’s why for me I believe this program we are going to introduce, is going to yield results because especially girls, they must have somebody they are looking up to. Now in my family, we had the first ever woman lawyer for Zambia Justice Lombe Chibesakunda and when she came back from Grayson/ Greysen in the UK and they splashed her on all the newspapers: Lombe Chibesakunda returns, first woman lawyer. I looked at it; I said if my aunt can do it, why can’t I? And I also decided I have to be a first. So even in selecting my career because I wanted to be a lawyer too – in selecting my career I made sure I selected a career that I was going to be the first. So as I came back from my training, in the Soviet Union at the time, I would even come back as a specialist in Microbiology and there was no other Microbiologist in the country. And I was very pleased about that. But the other thing that I think is important is being focused and decide this is where I want to be tomorrow. If you start – someone says jump this way you jump, you never get there. So for me my focus was to be a first in everything that I wanted to do. So when I came home, I joined the hospital, worked for a year, I went back to do a PhD and in my three years of doing my PhD, I also did a part time Masters in Immunology and again I was the first ever Immunologist in Zambia. Then as I worked at the University Teaching hospital, I decided I want to be a professor. And I remember one time the president at the time may his soul rest in peace, President Chiluba calling me to his office and offering me a ministerial position. He says I like your work, I like when you are speaking, you just speak you know so well, I want to appoint you as a minister. I said “Your Excellence I am very sorry to disappoint you but I always wanted to be a professor. Only when I have become a professor, can I look at anything else”. And he started following my career, so when I became the first ever woman professor, he actually called me and said I want to congratulate you, but now that you are a professor, can I now appoint you. I said No, because I have been wanting to be a professor so much, I am just starting to enjoy the title. So how can I become a politician, let me first enjoy my title. So I had to remain at the University Teaching hospital to enjoy just being called professor. And there is nothing I love, as being called professor because you know, I achieved it. So it is focus, it’s mentorship, the other thing is to persevere because education is not easy and passing exams are not easy and to read is not easy. So you have to persevere and make sure that you that you work hard, if you have to read eight hours a day if you are the slow type, read eight hours a day. If you have to read 24/7, read. And persevere and get there. So that was the other ingredient, it was perseverance. The other I think important ingredient is having a supporting family, I come from a very, very supportive family. In fact we are probably one of the largest families in Zambia but you never tell that we come from different backgrounds, we are always together, whatever happens in our family whether it be happiness we will all be there, if it is sadness we will all be there. If something happens to one of us, when I am suffering in my political career, my family holds my hands and if I am crying they cry with me. So it is very important to have a supportive family. And that’s one gift my grandfathers and grandmothers left us and our parents’ love for each other and support. So we have stayed together and that I think has contributed to a lot of us. But my father also used to say something, I don’t know how true it is but it worked for our family. He always said to our elder sister “If you make a mistake and get pregnant, then all your sisters will be like that”. So he made sure that my sister went through university. Then I was the second I just joined in and everybody. So if you look at our career base as a family, there is another sister of mine who is also a doctor, Dr Chewe Luo but she is a paediatrician by profession. She works for UNICEF in New York. I</p>

	<p>have got another younger sister who did business and finance and did MBA for her Masters and is now doing her PhD. I have a younger sister who is a software engineer and a brother who is a lawyer and so on and so on. So we then chose to be professional people, but that took a lot of us as a family again, realising that education was important. That's where we are, so when I speak to young people, that's what I tell them. That you know life will even be more interesting when you grow older. All these gifts you are trying to get because a man is giving you perfume, you will even be tired of buying your own perfume, you will be able to buy your own car. You will be able to buy your own house and things like that. So it is always better to wait until when that time comes. And I always say God's time is the best.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>Professor Luo thank you very much for sharing all of those elements and congratulations on all the "firsts" that you have achieved in your career, both on the medical side as well as on the political side. One of the areas that you have touched on was about mentorship and I often feel that mentorship and role modelling go hand in hand. Now in closing the discussion, can you please share a few words of inspiration to our young ladies living on the continent, that there is hope that they can do whatever it is that their heart desires?</p>
<p>GUEST NAME PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Well I think first of all that women must start celebrating themselves. And I will use this analogy in the way I feel about myself. I have always refused to agree even to the interpretation of the Bible that because a woman was created from Adam they are there for second class citizens. If God really wanted us to be second class citizens, he would have used the bone of the foot, he would have not chosen the rib. And in medicine, a rib cage, the bones of the rib – they are the protectors of most of the important organs of the body; the heart, the spleen, the intestines everything, the liver they are under the rib cage. So basically God was sending a signal that I am bringing a companion and a protector on this world, that's who I am. Secondly when Jesus was born, Jesus was born of a virgin and God would have chosen Joseph pregnant because virgins don't get pregnant, so don't men get pregnant. But Jesus chose Mary as a message of celebrating a woman once again. And when Jesus started growing up he started choosing his disciples. He didn't choose any women he chose men, 12. They went with him all over they saw the miracles, there is nobody who saw the amount of miracles as the 12 disciples but they chose to betray Jesus. And when Jesus was telling them that you are going to betray me today, he also said Peter, you are going to deny my three times before the cock crows. And God chose a woman to ask Peter, "You, I used to see you with this man of Nazareth". Peter denied Jesus three times. When Jesus was crucified, he was crucified with two men not women, two criminals that were men. When he rose up from the dead, he rose up to the women. For me that is a very important signal which I carry everywhere I go. God was celebrating us as women and therefore we need continue celebrating ourselves and never accept that we are second class citizens. And in celebrating ourselves, we must learn to love ourselves. This word called love is very important in one's life and you start by loving yourself. Because then nobody will treat you like a piece of trash. And when you get up in the morning and dress up, you must feel good and don't wear what people want you to wear, wear what you think looks good on you, that's how I start my day. When I look at myself in the mirror I see my outfit is looking good, I get out of my door into my car, I feel good for the rest of the day. So it is important to be yourself. For the young people, they have to wait. Because as I sit here I have achieved everything I have achieved. If I want to buy a house tomorrow, I will go and buy a house. If I want to buy a car tomorrow, I will go and buy a car. Don't wait for somebody to give you that gift because you can't get it yourself. With your intellectual ability, your capacity to deliver - if it is school</p>

	<p>deliver your subjects and pass with flying colours. If you are in college, deliver and so on. So I would like to end by saying the biggest offer that I have made for many young girls in Zambia is to be their mentor. I still want to repeat that I can say a lot of things the whole day today, but the best gift you can give to any young person is to mentor them and help them to achieve what they have to achieve.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you very much Professor Luo. It's been great having you and for talking about all of the various elements, the work that you have been doing in Zambia, the inspiration, the mentorship that you are giving to our young ladies across the continent.</p>
<p>GUEST NAME</p> <p>PROF. NKANDA LUO</p>	<p>Thank you very much.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You have been listening to Womanity – Women in Unity and we have been speaking to Professor Nkandu Lou Minister of Gender and Child Development for Zambia. Tune in to the show next week as we continue our series of discussions at the 25th African Union Summit, when we talk to Malawi's Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Patricia Kaliati.</p>
<p>END OF PROGRAM</p>	