

**PROGRAM DATE: 2016-04-21**

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

**GUEST NAME: JUDGE MONICA LEEUW – JUDGE PRESIDENT – NORTH WEST HIGH COURT SOUTH AFRICA**

<b>SPEAKER</b>	<b>TRANSCRIPTION</b>
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 on the line today is Honourable Judge President Moshangu Monica Leeuw who was appointed as the first female judge president in South Africa on 29 April 2010 for the North West jurisdiction. To name a few of her former roles she has been a State Advocate for the Bophuthatswana High Court, practiced as an advocate of the North West Bar, lectured students in civil and criminal procedure at the University of North West and Judge Leeuw has also served in the Labour Court of South Africa as acting and then permanent judge in the Labour Appeal Court. Welcome to the show.
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Thank you.</b>
DR. MALKA	Judge Leeuw you have broken numerous glass ceilings and one of many in your career was in 2010 where you were appointed as the first female judge president in South Africa, can you please share with us what your position entails and some of the responsibilities that come with being a high court judge president?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Ja, actually I...in addition to my normal work of presiding in court over matters, I allocate cases to the judges of my division as well as being responsible for the court administration that is the judicial functions of that particular court, you know the day to day administration as well as you know I am also a member of the entire that is the main body of judge presidents who are the leadership of the judiciary, so mainly I have to ensure and monitor the implementation of our norms and standards as well as to ensure that the courts are running smoothly, work is allocated to the various judges and also ensure that the court runs smoothly as far as cases are concerned.</b>
DR. MALKA	And obviously ensuring that we have a robust judicial system. Now in your current portfolio are there are any specific milestones that you want to accomplish?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Yes actually I really you know I our judicial system such that one of the main, main, main challenges in our judiciary or our court system is that cases take long to finalise you know, so if one were to what I wish to achieve which is one of the main aims of this present administration is to ensure that cases are finalised as expeditiously you know instead of allowing cases to drag on and on, it is my wish and my dream and it is also in our norms and standards that you know, if possible matters should be finalised as soon as possible, you know parties get discouraged that you go to court, matters take long to be finalised and that is where now you as a judge president plays a role because you enrol cases, you give out dates and you should be in a position to control cases and the role in such a way that they don't just get postponed without matters being finalised so my real milestone is to have access to justice and quick finalisation of cases.</b>

DR. MALKA	That would be a fantastic legacy. And Judge Leeuw reflecting a little on your history you were born in 1952 after matriculating in Pietersburg in 1970 you proceeded to the University of North West where you graduated in 1976 with a BProc degree; in 1987 you obtained your Bachelor of Law Degree at the University of North West and later obtained modules in LLM in Labour Law. Taking into consideration the fact that those were difficult times in South Africa's history can you please share with us what made you choose law as your major subject and future career path?
JUDGE LEEUW	<b>Well you know it's surprising, when I went to the university I didn't go there to register for law, you know, then there was no career guidance you know you just went to the university and I wanted to enrol to be just to do administration and only to find that I didn't get a place there so I opted to do law and ever since.....realised that that is a field actually where I was supposed to have been and I found that I was at home with doing law and you know for one to be in this field during that time you had to be focused and you were, it was a question of determination, you know I was determined to finish my degree and go back into the field and actually driven by the fact that in this position or in this profession you mainly are helping and dealing with the community. Mine was to see justice for the community and to make sure that whenever one does is in this field of law you have to be determined and just be you know determined to see the right things being done and that was one of the issues that made me to be passionate and make me to work hard in this profession so that to be eventually be where I am today.</b>
DR. MALKA	And particularly when you were studying it was a time where I had a conversation with Judge Khampepe and she said that when she was studying it was almost a career path that men did not want women to enter, it was particularly male dominated.
JUDGE LEEUW	<b>Ja, it's true, I remember when I was at university there were two women in my class doing law, it was a real male dominated profession and it wasn't also easy to get articles to be, to get articles in that field during that time when you are a woman and also you know even the salary was not that good then but if you had a goal that you wanted to achieve it didn't matter that much because the main thing is to, not to look at the now but be determined and be determined to succeed in what you are doing.</b>
DR. MALKA	And I think that's exactly the right mindset that one needs, needs to take when pursuing a path of passion and dedication.
JUDGE LEEUW	<b>Ja.</b>
DR. MALKA	Now looking from your position today do you consider that South Africa's legal system has developed according to your expectations?
JUDGE LEEUW	<b>Ja, with the new dispensation, with the new constitution you know where everybody's rights are being protected, I think we are going somewhere and we have actually reached...achieved a lot in the judiciary and law in general in the sense that our legal system has developed in such a way that now everybody has an opportunity to, you know, to develop and excel in whatever you're doing whereas previously you know there were these restrictions about gender, there were restrictions with regard to colour but right now you can you know develop in this field and do any...join any field of law without only being restricted to maybe usually you are restricted to doing maybe criminal matters, today you can venture into any field of the law and with the determination you'll succeed because there won't be any of those restrictions and as I say, perseverance, that is what made us succeed.</b>

DR. MALKA	And in effect part of those opportunities have been opened up because of those legislative changes so it's due to the law that we have these opportunities, not just within the legal system, but for women across all spheres of life.
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Yes definitely.</b>
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to the Judge President of the North West High Court in South Africa, Judge Monica Leeuw.
	<b>AD BREAK</b>
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, also available on DSTV Channel 902. Today we're talking to Judge President of the North West High Court, Judge Monica Leeuw who is South Africa's first female judge president. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	In the previous segment Judge Leeuw remarked on her time in university as a young law student where there were just two women in the class doing law and the difficulty for women to secure a position to do their articles during that time. Subsequently through the development of our legal system and the formation of the new constitution women are no longer subjected to those types of constraints. She also highlighted some of her responsibilities as judge president and expressed her wish that people across the breadth of the country have access to justice and cases in the court systems are finalised expeditiously.
DR. MALKA	Judge Leeuw you've built an outstanding professional career which has stretched across three decades to date. You were the first black woman to join the Pretoria Bar for the purpose of doing pupillage; you were the first woman to be appointed a control prosecutor in the Bophuthatswana West Regional Division; one of the first judges to be appointed Labour Appeal Court, the Labour Appeal Court of South Africa and that's just the professional dimension, on the home front you're a mom to three children and four grandchildren and you've been a community advocate and stalwart in terms of a member of the Women's Missionary Society for the last 30 years serving your church as a Trustee and Steward, can you please share with us some of your time management secrets on how to successfully build a professional career, raise a family and still find time to serve your community?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Ja, that was tough because when I started working I only had a BProc degree and I was working in court and then I had two children, still babies. When I started my baby was two months old and then four years thereafter, before I got my LLB I was working and having a family, it was tough in the sense that you had to go to work in the morning, take the children to the crèche and then come back to cook in the afternoon, so you actually...and you know also know that on Sunday I have to go to church you know try and get some relief and reprieve there and during the weekends you know, to attend to your social issues but as I say it was all hard work and it was tough being a wife, being a mother and at the same time being a control prosecutor then in court and again I got my LLB when I was pregnant with my third child so there it was even tougher but as I say, you get so used to be work alcoholic or workaholic to the extent that you know to me it was a question of managing your time, it was a routine that I have time for my family, I have time for work, although sometimes you had no choice but to carry work home and wait for the children to sleep and wake up maybe 03:00am to do your office work and so on, it is a question of trying to manage your time but at the same time knowing that my goal is to better myself because had I just remained with my LLB I wouldn't have</b>

	<p>had the opportunity of going to do pupillage because I required an LLB degree to do that. I had to leave my family and my kids for twelve months to go and do pupillage because I had this thing that I can't be working at the same place in court as a ...., I needed to change and do something different, but as I say when I started practicing as an advocate it was easy because now I had no employer, I was my own employer so it was easy for me to manage my time you know usually I will do cases in the morning and I had time for my children in the afternoon and so on, that was before I was appointed to a judge but when I was elevated to the bench they were already adults so that's how it happened.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And I think that people often underestimate the sacrifice that it takes and sometimes those compromises to really integrate and achieve what you need to do as an individual to be fulfilled and also to serve your community, to serve your country that those sacrifices have to be made.</p>
JUDGE LEEUW	<p><b>Yes definitely, definitely, you definitely need to do extra, you do more than you know put more extra time into what you want to do, everything focus, you must have a goal, I want to do this and if you have that goal all these things you'll be in a position to overcome because you know you have a goal in life.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>They almost become secondary.</p>
JUDGE LEEUW	<p><b>Ja...</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Judge Leeuw, this programme 'Womanity – Women in Unity' aims to celebrate prominent and ordinary African women's milestone achievements whether it is struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence, in your opinion how well have we done regarding these issues in the last three decades?</p>
JUDGE LEEUW	<p><b>Well a lot because as I say legislation has also even contributed to this and mainly legislation that emanates from what the constitution thinks. The constitution provides for all these things to human rights, democracy to be legislated in order to protect those rights which were previously not available to everybody and I don't know, I'm of the view that a lot has been done in the past three years, we still have a long way to go but a lot has been done and we see a lot of changes, people being empowered, people are ..human rights especially people know their rights, people are liberated so there are no longer those restrictions you know, people can, you can see....we can go to or their potential you know they can show their potential because there are no restrictions and I think South Africa has done...has really done well in that respect.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>We've certainly achieved, when we look at it from a parliamentary point of view in terms of our representation that I think at the moment we're ranked eighth in the world of the Inter-parliamentary Union with, if I recall correctly, 41% composition in parliament.</p>
JUDGE LEEUW	<p><b>Ja, ja....</b></p>
DR.MALKA	<p>Now what do you think women as a group should do in order to bring more change and to strive for achieving the 50% representation across all sectors of society?</p>
JUDGE LEEUW	<p><b>I should think women we are the ones who should empower other women you know, you have been there you know how.... what the position was prior to the new dispensation and just be a role model for those who want to aspire to you know, break the ceiling where...and venture into those areas where usually women would not be expected to be in and they need our support, those who went through the tough times you know, to</b></p>

	<b>encourage those....the young ones there, you'll get there, have patience it's not as tough as it appears, things are even easier these days than during our time and if whatever you want to do you should not back up and say I'm afraid it's not a woman's field, but go there as long as you know that you will definitely, with the help of God, achieve what you want.</b>
DR. MALKA	So it's a case of lifting people up, taking them with you, providing the encouragement, asking them to be assertive and to not be afraid of venturing into unknown territory.
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Yes....</b>
DR. MALKA	And whilst we're still talking in the realm from a legal point of view, South Africa's Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill is currently undergoing consultation and review, it's principle aim is to promote and achieve equality for women across the board. We've touched a little bit about legislation aiding women but how do you think legislation can help improve elements such as closing gender gaps whether it is in pay, promotion or position?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Well it will help a lot in the sense that you know if something is legislated it in a way says you must do it, it's like an instruction, you must do it so if it is controlled and it is legislated we know that it has to be that way and that emanates from the constitution itself because the constitution says everybody is equal and no discrimination in terms of gender, status and so on, so it will...it actually reinforces what is in the constitution and since we are only accountable to the constitution it will be...it's a positive legislation which really encourages and it shows that the country or the government is serious about, or the legislative is serious about empowering women and having equality in all respects and so on.</b>
DR.MALKA	Yes and fulfilling...and that the people fulfil and adhere to the constitution which effectively is our...our...I'm trying to think of an expression here...but it's almost, it's sacrosanct in terms of our ideals for the country and how we've built it and where we want to proceed to.
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to the Judge President of the North West Court of South Africa, Judge Monica Leeuw.
	<b>AD BREAK</b>
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 also available on DSTV Channel 902. Today we're talking to Judge President of the North West High Court, Justice Monica Leeuw, who is South Africa's first female Judge President. We would love to receive your comments on <a href="https://twitter.com/WomanityTalk">Twitter@WomanityTalk</a> .
DR. MALKA	In the last segment Judge Leeuw shared some of the challenges she faced as a working mother developing her career as well as being an active member of her community. She emphasised the importance of setting goals and remaining focused to achieve those targets. She highlighted the role of legislation to promote equal rights and the empowerment of women emphasising that issues which are controlled and legislated are the ones that get implemented.
DR.MALKA	Judge Leeuw turning towards more of a personal aspect, one of the questions that I ask my guests on this show who've all made tremendous achievements in their respective fields is about the factors that they consider to have contributed to their success. Some people talk about passion, others talk about hard work, some speak about strong women influences in their lives. In your opinion what have been the key drivers to your success?

<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	With me it was passion and hard work and passion, hard work and one thing is I told myself if I know I'm doing the right thing, I'm in the right, never ever be afraid to be assertive, you know, you can go a long way with being assertive and being genuine, I think that's who I am, I'm always assertive and know that this is the time for me to say something and be an advocate for human rights, you know and enjoy and be passionate about what you are doing.
DR. MALKA	I think those are incredibly important characteristics and attitudes to adhere to. Now can you share with us some of the pivotal moments in your life growing up, what influenced you during those years?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	Well growing up I must say even though I never thought I would be a lawyer, growing up during the apartheid you know, era, I had always told myself that I couldn't understand what this apartheid meant for me and I had cherished in my life that one day I would be like you know because I used to like watching these programmes on...actually then during our time you would even listen to some stories, hear about stories of injustice here and there and I as a child and as I was growing up I told myself you know, when I grow up I don't think I will be in...I will tolerate things like this, especially I'll tell you something, you know as a black woman...a black girl you would go to these administrative offices and you hear the people you know in order for you to get help you had to pay some bribes and so on and I always told myself but why should people be corrupt you know, I was only.....and I told myself that when I work, the day I start working I'm going to serve my community with respect and I'm going to be honest and show the people that whenever you're appointed or employed in this administrative office you are there to serve them and not for them to pay you for that and indeed when I started working, really my dream was achieved because I enjoyed helping people and to me salary was not the primary issue, it was to me like now it has become a call that now here I am helping people and not caring about the financial contribution that I get it's a very little thing but in I enjoyed it and that is one of the driving issues as to why I really enjoy it.
DR. MALKA	I think your moral rights, your human rights, your view on corruption are elements which should ideally pervade across all positions of office.
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Ja, definitely....</b>
DR. MALKA	And Judge Leeuw what would you say had the biggest impact on you to make you the person you are today?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>What did you say?</b>
DR. MALKA	What would you say had the biggest impact to make you the person you are today?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Honesty. Honesty, being honest to everybody and you know we make mistakes what I mean is I'm being honest and assertive and you know, know your rights and also you know standing for those who don't have a voice, you know, if you realise that there is an injustice being done being it in change, be it in the social circle, do not keep quiet, do not keep quiet because you will have the knowledge, you will have the tools help those who don't know by talking on their behalf you know as I say like when I was practicing if I realise that this person really needed help and you know as an advocate you needed to pay, I would just do the matter sometimes you know even if I don't get paid because I was looking at the fact that this person really needs to be defended even though this person has no money but I'm doing a social duty to this person so as I say it's a compassionate</b>

	<b>nature that I have, you know, amongst my people that I think that drove me to maybe be where I am today.</b>
DR. MALKA	I think that all of those attributes have stood you steady in your career.
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to the Judge President of the North West High Court in South Africa, Judge Monica Leeuw.
	<b>AD BREAK</b>
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, also available on DSTV Channel 902. Today we are talking to Judge President of the North West High Court Justice Monica Leeuw who is South Africa's first female Judge President. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	In the previous segment Judge Leeuw described some of the factors that have contributed to her success as an advocate for human rights namely passion, hard work and honesty, to serve her community with respect and helping those in need.
DR. MALKA	Judge Leeuw we are unfortunately coming to the end of our discussion can I please ask you to share a few words of inspiration which you'd like to pass on to women in Africa who are listening to us today?
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Yes to the women of Africa I say don't underestimate what you can do to change the world. It can be something very small and we may think people are not noticing but if you know you are on the right path and you are convinced that what you are doing is for the good of yourself and the nation, do it, don't be underestimate yourself. Be assertive, believe it will have an impact on someone on yourself and that way you will realise that you also have a lot to contribute in a country.</b>
DR. MALKA	Thank you very much Judge Leeuw.
<b>JUDGE LEEUW</b>	<b>Thank you, you're welcome.</b>
	<b>PROGRAMME END</b>