

**PROGRAM DATE: 2016-07-14**

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

**GUEST NAME: BONGIWE MSOMI – VICE-CAPTAIN OF THE SPAR PROTEAS SA NATIONAL NETBALL TEAM**

| <b>SPEAKER</b>       | <b>TRANSCRIPTION</b>  |
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| 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 from Durban in South Africa is Bongiwe Msomi who is the Vice-captain of the Spar Proteas, the South African National Netball Team. Bongiwe has 66 caps for the national team, her preferred positions are centre and wing attack; in addition to her role in the national team she plays for the Kingdom Stars in the Brutal Fruit Netball Premier League. Internationally she has also played for the Surrey Storms in the United Kingdom's Super League. Welcome to the show.  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>Hi thank you so much for having me.</b>  |
| DR. MALKA            | Bongiwe can you please tell us when you first became interested in netball?   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>I started playing netball in 2004, I remember I was in grade 11 and we were at a netball training at a school, I was at a high school called Luthayi High School and most of my neighbourhood friends came to this high school to start grade 8 so I was grade 11 at that time and I used to go there and just watch them playing netball, I knew all the rules beforehand but I never played the sport so I remember this one training they were short by one player to make the full court match, then one of my friends suggested that the coach put me in just to fill in and that's how I started, but really I had never had any interest in playing sports and I would really say from there I have grown a lot and a lot has been happening through netball and it's been just amazing.</b>  |
| DR.MALKA             | And we'd love to unpack some of those achievements as we go along through the conversation from starting off 2004 in school, moving through and becoming a member of the national team and being Vice-captain none less.  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>Ja..</b>   |
| DR. MALKA            | Can you tell us who some of your sports heroes are and what you admire most about them?   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>With that definitely I would say I admire all the sports athletes or just anyone who does their...who does go through their like journey of love and really succeed in it because I understand exactly all the challenges that you have to face, especially in sports, but just to mention a few I love Serena Williams just for that I must say .... the way she just.....you can see the way she performs she just loves the sport that she's doing which is tennis obviously and just her interviews every time she played a match I listen to her interviews and ja it's always amazing to listen to her stories and just when people don't trust her and don't believe in her she just keeps so being positive and I think that is at a... she is at another level with that because it's really a struggle to try and be positive in mindset when people are really not behind you and you still perform at your best level so I really admire her on that and I know here in South Africa we've got athletes like Natalie Du Toit and Bridgette Hartley, I've always looked obviously for</b> |

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|                      | <p>what they do and always listen to what they say or listen to their journeys in sports and it's also .....as a player so there is really a lot, Caster Semenya as well and ja it's just I admire all the athletes and all the work that they do, all their achievements because I know exactly firsthand how it is to be at that level.</p>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>And I think one of the things it is a journey and I heard a wonderful quote from Billy Jean King who was an American former number one professional tennis player and she said "<i>champions keep playing until they get it right</i>".</p>   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p><b>Exactly, as an athlete myself I really say that's a positive quote.</b></p>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>And I heard another great one from Michael Jordan and he said "<i>I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career, I've lost almost 300 games; 26 times I have been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed</i>" ..... what do you think about that statement?</p>  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p><b>I remember exactly we were in Johannesburg, I think it was for the Brutal Fruit Netball League and we did read one of those in our changing room as a team and I really think it's amazing, we as athletes we do struggle at times with obviously home challenges, you do battle to get things right on court when you try and play together, but to just read those things because that again remind you that it's not just what you are achieving or not achieving now but it's just a way forward and your goal is not just something that you can give one step and reach your goal, it's something that has to keep on going and you need to really have a target as to even if doesn't if it doesn't go right now but I can always work towards that and I think all those athletes are amazing and to read their stories as a woman myself I say it's just amazing there's never a smooth life but you can always read through those kind of quotes and you can always refer it to your challenges and try and push forward, if they could do it then obviously we can all do it.</b></p>   |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Can you tell us about one of your most memorable games?</p>   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p><b>I would say that to represent the country mostly all the games are memorable but I remember exactly I think it was 2013 when we played against England and England is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world and we 5<sup>th</sup> so there was a test series where we played...ja...it was....I think it was triad because there was also Trinidad and Tobago so it was Trinidad, England and the Spar Proteas, we played our first match against them and we lost so at that point we knew exactly that it wasn't going to be easy because they ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> which is really higher than us but we obviously knew we had a chance to win against them, then the next day we played Trinidad and Tobago of which we did well then we had to play England again on finals, that was such an amazing game, I remember myself on the last whistle went and I just stood there and I couldn't believe I thought it was a time out call because there were many of those time out calls just because the game wasn't very easy, it was tough so there were like a lot of injuries, time calls for the coaches as well to come in and coach but it was so amazing to win against them and just to know that from South Africa without any doubt we are at that better level where we can also challenge to play the number one to third in the world and we can really do better against them. I think the whole team, not even myself only, we all were proud of that moment and ja it was just an amazing win and I still remember that, even now.</b></p> |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Those are always fantastic moments to reflect on and one point you spoke about was that every time you step out and you're representing the country that that is a significant occasion, how do you feel representing South Africa on the</p>   |

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|                      | international circuit?   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p>I will definitely say as much as I can try and explain but it's just feeling that I wouldn't really be 100% in trying to make it or see how it feels, it's just amazing. I think every time my name gets called up to be one of the twelve team players that are going to represent their country, in each and every year or in each and every occasion it feels new, it feels like it's just happening now and it's the first time it's happening but again it all goes with I know all the expectations around that and at that time I just think okay it's another time where I need to just now going back home and going through my problem and start working hard because we know exactly if that if you represent a country then there's a lot of people behind you, there's a lot of girls that...I wouldn't say netball only but there's a lot of girls who look at us as athletes in South Africa and want to be us one day so it's one of those things that you know you're not doing your best only for yourself but for a lot of lives out there and you're giving hope to a lot of girls that really doesn't believe that they can do it ,so it's just amazing and ja I really feel blessed that it's been happening for so many occasions and it's something that I've never taken for granted because I know that there's a lot of girls in South Africa that are capable to be in the squad or in the team of the Spar Proteas, so I'm blessed to be in the twelve, it's just amazing.</p>   |
| <b>DR. MALKA</b>     | <p>And on that note as an international sportswoman you've reached the top of your game, you are a role model as you've mentioned, to young women, demonstrating to many girls and young women in South Africa that through hard work and perseverance that anything can be achieved, how do you perceive that responsibility?</p>   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p>I am lucky to be from a township called Hammarsdale that's based in Durban as well and from home I've been wanting to be a person that can always try and help out and this year I'd say, I've been talking about being blessed so much now but I can already say I've been blessed with a job because I've been hired as an .....project ambassador and in this project I myself do research and I do workshops for the girls and I try and find out like what issues they are facing in sport and what you make them start playing sports and we speak about a lot of things that I can also go back and sit and try and see where we can find help for the girls to be involved into sports, not to be competitive at some stage, if they want to that's a bonus but to be involved into sports just make them see and understand that they don't have...it's not only an option of representing the country but they can always live healthy for going to gym and to be an active woman and they can always achieve a lot of achievements because if you can also go in such a way that they can if you understand the sport obviously you've got the first job as being a coach if you can go out there and try and coach and just administration side so I think that alone for me has been amazing to get to meet these girls and they just so, so amazed and like when I stand in front of them I remember I did one of the workshops and the girls were like we cannot believe you are right in front of us they see me on TV and I said that's exactly my point if I can come in front of you and talk about my issues and my experiences that I faced growing up and trying to be involved into sports and make you understand that you can also go through those challenges and still achieve so much then you can obviously change so much lives out there, so in that note I really, I feel so blessed to be able to go out and help other young ones and I remember I did ask at one stage do really now before I go out, do you really think if you were not involved into sports or if you didn't want to be can you now say</p> |

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|                      | <b>yes I promise I'll be involved, I'll be an active woman and there were like a lot of kids they were like yes please and I said yes, that was my point exactly, so I think it's been just an amazing journey for me obviously challenging at times because of my training schedule and my, all my national duties but it's just amazing, I can always feel blessed to give back.</b>  |
| DR. MALKA            | What a great way to be able to give back and to give back to the community that you come from and to really show that you are living proof that success is possible, doesn't matter where you come from, but it's about putting in that hard work and motivating others to rise up and achieve as well.   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>Ja it's just amazing.</b>  |
| DR. MALKA            | Today we're talking to Bongiwe Msomi, Vice-captain of the Spar Proteas, the South African National Netball Team.  |
|                      | <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 802. Today we're talking to Bongiwe Msomi who is the Vice-Captain of the Spar Proteas, the South African National Netball Team.   |
| DR. MALKA            | In our previous segment Bongiwe explained how she got into netball starting off at high school and then proceeding to join the national team, the Spar Proteas in South Africa. She spoke about some of her sports heroes, who are fantastic sportswomen well known Serena Williams through to South African legends Natalie Du Toit and Caster Semeyena and importantly how Bongiwe gives back through to her community to inspire young girls to go on to play sport and to motivate themselves into healthier living and possibly even entering the competitive field.   |
| DR.MALKA             | Bongiwe as an international player you have quite a gruelling schedule I'm sure, from a coaching point of view, can you give us a typical day, a day in the life, how much time is spent in training and practicing?  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>Oh that's a....it's not as tough because now I get to get used to it but it's really a difficult time of any athletes because at one stage you need to make sure you are in time for work and you do your job accordingly and you still need to make sure that you're fit and ready for any competition coming up but my busy schedule, I start work at 08:30 and before that I start at gym which I start at 06:30 then I finish at 07:45 and then from there I quickly have to get showered and then get to work. Luckily everything is close by and it's just about 5/7 minute drive from my home to the gym and then from there to work as well so it really works nicely for me and then later during the day I normally have court sessions where I do all my netball drills and fitness, footwork and everything and that I do with my teammates, obviously the KZN Kingdom Stars, some of the players from there and any other club netball players and it really, I wouldn't have a set standard time because at times you would know you finish work later than normal and it also has to depend on that, but I would say fully 3-4 times a week, 2 to 3 hours would be a nice week for me as a national netball player.</b> |
| DR. MALKA            | So it's all in the dedication and it's not just about the individual but it's also about the team. Now as a team from a South African perspective, so Team SA, what would you say are the one to two qualities that differentiates Team SA from other countries?  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>I remember I went and played an Indian netball super league last year and some of the coaches there really said the team, like our players are really athletic and have got the skill and they've got everything it takes that you would look for in any athlete and with that I would say that's also made</b>  |

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|                      | <p>any other coach want to be involved with the squad or the team of the Spar Proteas and it's a definite that we do have a potential, at some point and we do feel like we should have been more together at the training camp obviously to get used more to each other, I think that has been happening so well through all the help of Netball South Africa and all our sponsors and ja we, I really think we've got the skill and fitness as well it's just a matter of us getting on court together and ja, making things happen.</p>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>And with your experiences, as an international player, not only representing South Africa but you've also played for the Surrey Storms in the United Kingdom Super League, can you tell us a little of that experience?</p>  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p>Again, I did mention that to be a Spar Protea, that alone is at another level but to be in England last year at some stage I wouldn't lie so it's like okay maybe it's been long, you're not used to being away from home for that long but it was just an experience that no-one could take away from me or from any other player if they get to experience one but I think for their style of play it was amazing for me as a player to come from South Africa and go and play their style of netball. Every player wants to get a different coaching to be able to up their game and I think that's exactly what I, a nice chance that I got to have to go overseas and train with those athletes from everywhere, from most other countries and ja I think it's grown again, it's grown me as a person mentally as well. There are a lot of things that I think that I had to really be able to live by and ja it was just an amazing experience and with that I was really proud that in one of the games I was named player of the match which was just an amazing experience as well to go from South Africa and go play league in England and still be able to achieve an award, ja it's been an amazing journey and netball has been good to me as well as a player.</p>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Well congratulations and with all of those different experiences, having that diversity, it just increases your range and scope and when you put that all together it always makes you stronger and improve in the game. When we hear about successful people we have this tendency to think that these achievements happened overnight, but in reality we're really witnessing the end result of years of hard work and discipline and dedication which they've invested into their chosen sport and additionally behind those scenes there's usually a support structure backing the individual, what's your opinion on the role of support systems to contribute to success?</p>  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p>For my support system I'll start from home, from my club coach Thembisa Ngwabe he has been just an amazing person to boost my netball and from school growing up and playing so much of netball he's always there and always sits and watches all my games and he tries to help here and there and that alone is such an amazing part of me being a player and knowing exactly that there's someone who's looking after my performance and I can always go back to him and find out what I have to work on and for all of the coaches that I get to meet along the way, either in cup level, at the provincial level, in a national side, I wouldn't want to name them because I don't want to miss any one of them it has been an amazing journey for me and I know it's going to still be, ja they've all had a different style of coaching which really again that helped me as a player and it really has grown me and just for the support structure, in KZN we are very lucky to have the Prime it's called the EADP programme which is the Elite Athlete Development Programme from DSR (Department of Sport and Recreation) and they have really been supportive to us through all of that, they've done all our training programmes and they've made us all to Prime it's a gym that you can go for free and when you get there everything is done for you,</p> |

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|                      | <p>you just get your programme and you follow the programme, I think it's the KZN Sport &amp; Recreation has been just amazing for us and then I wouldn't forget Netball South Africa through everything that they have to go through in trying to really take netball at that level they have been doing such a tremendous job, I know we've got now the Brutal Fruit netball league which is really every year it's growing. Last year we played I think it was about 4 weeks and this year it has really grown I think we were close 7 to 8 weeks which is really amazing for us as players because we get more time to be on court as well to be competitive for all those games coming up. Again as a player, all our sponsors, the support behind the scenes, everyone that does support the Star Proteas, it's just been an amazing journey for each and every one of us as athletes I'm sure all the girls will be like yes we're grateful because we do, I know we get shoes as well of which any player really will love to get free shoes as very often they get worn out very quickly but ja I think I've mentioned a nice number I don't know if I've left anyone but.....</p>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Those are, it's actually absolutely critical that you've got the support structure behind you and that goes through from a point of view on governance, on looking it at a provincial level, looking at it at a national level, looking at it at this sponsors that go in behind to ensure that as players you just have one job to do and that's to play.</p>  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p><b>Definitely, it has been amazing.</b></p>   |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Now netball's quite interesting I think in the fact that it's a woman's, it's a woman's only sport and one of the things that I find quite I suppose, men's sport... let me get this out a little bit more eloquently. Netball I think is fairly unique in that it always seems to be a...it's a woman's only sport and one of the other challenges that we look at from a sporting point of view is that men's sport in general achieves iconic status the world over whether it's soccer, tennis, hockey, cricket, what do you think needs to be done to help elevate the profile of women's sport?</p>   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p><b>I think on that we all know that it's been like this, but a lot of us have to work towards that to try and help us. As women in sports we all know we are really unable as yet to get to a level where the men are in terms of being recognised and everything and that alone goes back to where...to saying the kids or the girls growing up do drop sports because they feel like if they see us and we don't have that much support and that much recognition then they are not going to get involved into sports, but I really think it has to go to a point where even men themselves have to take an initiative because I do understand that if you're not a father or you're not .....you should be a brother or you definitely have a link to a girl out there which means for everything that's we or whoever that we want to do for women in sports to try and bring that recognition for them as well, you can also be involved, I think there should be more like workshops even if it's for parents making them understand how important it is, the support behind the scenes, I believe myself as females we do have the potential to sit and make things happen but we definitely need to have that recognition and we need to have the full support behind the scenes if there is, if I can make an example if there is like a soccer administration cause or something like that there should be one for females as well because it doesn't have to be a gender thing in an administrative point of view if it does, if it's not in athletes because we do have soccer players as females which means everything that needs to be done has to be done in both genders and especially the sports that does require both genders to participate but I think it's something that</b></p> |

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|                      | <p>especially all or not or most of the females should get into and try and help out but as well we do, I feel like we do draw back on trying to do something about it because we are afraid or we don't want to fail. I really believe that if we do something rather fail see that it doesn't happen instead of not doing anything at all but we are really are like way back in trying to be recognised and I know in all my workshops as well I would ask the girls beforehand just to see if they know who I am and all of that and at some point you will only get out of like 150 girls sitting in a workshop there will only be like 2 or 3 who will know who I am , that low, it's not because they don't like the sport but it's because we are not really, we are not really as recognised as men will be. Social media is connected, you will read the whole week about all of the male sports, about everything that's happened for man for that week but there will be like a few of things mentioned for women especially if it's all about achievement in their careers like either in a business point of view or in sports as well.</p> |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>So we need to work on increasing the visibility of women's sports, so through greater media coverage even securing more sponsorship deals with corporates and being more vocal about it, so even in the social media space whether it comes through from individual players or in a concerted effort at a broadcasting media level.</p>  |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>Definitely.</b>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Today we're talking to Bongiwe Msomi, Vice-Captain of the Spar Proteas, the South African National Netball Team.</p>   |
|                      | <b>AD BREAK</b>   |
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| DR. MALKA            | <p>In the previous segment Bongiwe shared with us some of the components that go behind the scenes in terms of support structures, whether that's from a government level through to a provincial level, through to independent coaches as well as sponsorships of the sport and the need to create greater visibility and recognition of women in sport so that we can start elevating the status of women's sport.</p>  |
| DR. MALKA            | <p>Bongiwe, this programme 'Womanity – Women in Unity' is all about gender equality which is increasingly a global focus and as such, building female leadership capacity is important for the future of women, not only in South Africa, in the continent and throughout the world. As Vice-captain of the team, can you tell us a little bit more of how you see female leadership in South Africa and how we can build on this capability?</p>   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <p><b>Just on that note I will say because I know her Ms Mimi Mthethwa in Netball South Africa and she's been the president of Netball for more than 4 years if I'm not mistaken and she's been doing a great job that everybody in this country would know and would really acknowledge her work that she's doing, there's Blanche de la Guerre who is also the CEO as well and if I look at how they have done just for both those females to go as women and take such a federation which is really big and which has such expectation as well and do such a great job it's been, for me it's amazing and it does show that as women as well we can go and stand together and try and achieve whatever that you want to achieve. I know I'm being disclosed here because I speak for netball but again if you can go and look at how netball has grown from where it was before up until now, everyone</b></p>   |

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|                      | is talking about that and they haven't been, not been discriminatory but there hasn't been a male involved in that, in those positions of leaderships but it has been only women.   |
| DR. MALKA            | Great. And what words of advice would you give to share with young aspiring athletes?   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>I've got to say that if I conceive it and I believe it then I can achieve it. I think for my life I've been, from where I come from I took everything up until now, I'm not at a disadvantage but I've been grateful to be a person that comes from this little township of Hammersdale and to achieve so much because at some point I look at it and I say eish if I wasn't from this township maybe I would have been wanting to do something else or something different as compared to what I'm doing now so I really would like to say to all the girls out there have your goal and see it, know what you want, be sure of what you want and just work towards them. Along the way there will be people have been asked because I think at some point the girls will fear to try and start something because they will think it's not going to work, it will always work if you definitely want it to work. So just have your goals, know exactly what you want because that alone can be another problem you can see something but it might not be what you really want but you want something else so if you focus on something that you want and you know that this is it so you can just work towards it and I'm definite you're going to achieve it and just to say sports as well it's just such a good platform for every person, for every women to be involved into, I am definite that you cannot, you cannot lose anything from being involved into sports but rather you can gain a lot so I encourage the girls to really be part and be involved in sports, be active and ja just we need to go and try hard. We want to stop this thing of saying as women we are weak, we can't do things, we can't achieve things, if you have the mind you've got the eyes, you've got the body you can do anything, everyone can really do anything they want to achieve, they can achieve so much just as long as they know what they want and they can work towards their goals, and that's what I would like to say.</b> |
| DR.MALKA             | I think those are wonderful words of inspiration and encouragement. Bongiwe it's been an absolutely pleasure having you on our show today, we wish you all the very best in the next events that you are participating in, so thank you very much for joining us.   |
| <b>BONGIWE MSOMI</b> | <b>Thank you so much, thank you.</b>  |
|                      | <b>PROGRAMME END</b>  |