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

**GUEST NAME: ROSINA SEMENYA – CHAIRPERSON OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES**

<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 Miss Rosina Semanya who is a member of parliament and serves as the current Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Welcome to the show Mrs. Semanya.
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Good afternoon Doctor and good afternoon to your viewers...to your listeners.</b>
DR. MALKA	It's such a pleasure to have you on the air. Can you please tell us more about your role as Chairperson of Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Let me start by thanking you for having me on your programme. My role as the Chairperson of Agriculture is to lead and manage the Committee work reside over the committee members and make sure that all members are discussing issues in line with the rules and the constitution of the Republic of South Africa. I present the report of the Committee to National Assembly on behalf of the Committee and create space for participation of civil society in our programme and as we have a public hearing or we want a view on specific topics and collaborate with other portfolio committees on specific issues affecting our sector as Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry, those are my responsibilities and make sure that every now and then the Committee meet and pass legislation prepares legislation which relate to Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry and present a report for a debate in the assembly.</b>
DR. MALKA	And Ms Semanya in this current term of office can you tell us a little bit more about what the portfolio committee aims to achieve?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Firstly as a Portfolio Committee our mandate is to oversee the work of the Department of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry, pass legislation in relation to the sector and make sure there is public participation as we deal with specific issues which relate to the sector and we oversee the Department's plan, strategic plan and APP that are in line with the budgets that have been passed by parliament and make sure that their goals and objectives are in line with strategic framework as pronounced by the president. Annually the president will give the state of the nation outlining the programme of the year and as the Portfolio Committee we will then oversee the department which relate to all the issues, the policy pronouncement that government has made whether the department is implementing in line with the budget that has been allocated to them and visit the projects that are being implemented by the department that are in line with the policies of government and so far our achievement is that we have made sure that the department produces a strategic framework for the sector which identify commodities in line with various sectors, in line with what the country can produce, what the country are able to market. We have managed to make sure that the department pass legislation, since we are in the office already we have passed four legislations on the control</b>

	<p>of the .....previous rights and plant improvement price and we are busy now facilitating the liquor act again as a committee and we have made sure that we effectively make sure that the department collaborates with other governments as a way of cooperative governance to make sure that they deal with sectoral issues that affect the sector which are in terms of the constitution, are concurrent functions.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Your Portfolio Committee effectively touches every single citizen's life, everyone has to eat; everyone has to consume products from agriculture and inevitably within the fishery space. Part of your career, you've been an activist in the Congress Movement since the days when organisations of people were still prohibited in apartheid South Africa and in that space you've dedicated your life and served your country for many years in various positions, can you please share with us a few of the landmarks in your career thus far?</p>
MS ROSINA SEMENYA	<p><b>Let me say Doctor that I've grown up within the Congress Movement. I started my participation before the burning of the ANC in the country, as a student activist, as a youth activist until the burning where the ANC has established itself in the country and I led structures of the ANC and of the ANC Women's League, in particular as the Chair of the Women's League and I served as the Secretary, I served as an additional member in the higher structure of the province, presently I'm serving at the National Executive Committee of the ANC Women's League and the National Executive Committee of the ANC.</b></p>
DR.MALKA	<p>Those are all significant roles in a very strong political career. You've spoken about the past, the present and today you are Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and in effect you deal with aspects that affect every citizen's life, not only in today's world but also in the years to come and in that journey you've become a role model, providing evidence to many women and girls in South Africa that through hard work and personal sacrifice anything can be achieved. Could you give us some insight in terms of some of the responsibilities that come with being a member of parliament and having such a demanding career?</p>
MS ROSINA SEMENYA	<p><b>Firstly you have to be a responsible citizen, you have to be an exemplary, you have to be humble to communities, you have to be accessible and you have to allow yourself to be led because that is the most critical thing for you as a member of parliament because you're being led by structures on the ground in parliament, in society in general and you have to be accessible to the constituency that you serve so that you are able to communicate with them, interacting with them, taking their issues that affect them, raise them in parliament in the stage where you can contribute in the transformation of their lives to the better.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you for enlightening us on some of the responsibilities there. Could you please share with us some of the gender challenges that you've experienced and more importantly managed to overcome during your career?</p>
MS ROSINA SEMENYA	<p><b>The most challenging gender issue is patriarchy that we are operating within it because it has been institutionalised in society in various institutions. As a woman you will have to double your efforts for you to be able to pursue the agenda of transformation in areas of your deployment. You have to persevere, you have to be very strong, you have to be a mother at the same time so you need to be patient but consistently making sure that the objectives that you stand for are pushed forward. Where there is need for.....you will make sure that you mobilise women for you to achieve those issues, particularly in South Africa. You'd remember that when I grew up in the movement I've learned that those that came before us, they have never before in the 20's in the Congress Movement women</b></p>

	<p>were not even allowed to be members of the Congress Movement and it was through their perseverance, through consistent fights, commitment that in the 40's they were allowed to have the membership of the organisation and as the organisation was unbanned, the first congress women of South Africa led by former President .....Sisulu, they demanded 30% representation of women because the belief has been that women have been fighting side by side with our men colleagues and the ANC of the Congress Movement acknowledging that the struggle of women is the struggle of the people of South Africa, therefore women are entitled to hold position in the movement and that's why...it has been like that throughout but because of the patriarchy that we've been entrenched in society you find resistance that women themselves has to push starting with the 50%, today as we speak we have the constitution of the Congress Movement having accepted that women...we should have women....50% of women in the leadership of women in all the structures of the movement.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Mrs. Semanya you're absolutely right and frequently patriarchy is raised as a point of concern in the conversations that I've had with other women on our show "Womankind – Women in Unity" and it seems to be almost as a combined dynamic of women, as you mentioned, standing up for their rights, being persistent and trying to achieve those resolutions and for women themselves to be very resolute, you yourself have said that you've had to work ten times nearly as hard, you've had to be persistent in your endeavours because patriarchy has been so institutionalised in society, what more do you think we can do to make it easier for the women who come after us so that they don't have to walk this journey again, and is it a combination of viewpoints from men and from women changing?</p>
MS ROSINA SEMENYA	<p><b>Firstly is that as the new government has started to change some of the legislation, which have been very oppressive to women, but I think what is needed now is to...because the Congress Movement they are now talking about the second transition towards socio-economic freedom, therefore, we need to change the laws to suite the conditions of our women such that they will be able to participate in the development of their own country and they become the drivers themselves towards the perceived destination and women should be able to...we should establish policies not to go through the process that ourselves was going through, it should as a member of...as a gender activist I believe we should pass legislation on gender relations and society should be educated, particularly as we grow young women and boys, their social relations is very important for the liberation of ...the total liberation of our women. They need to be assisted to access funds to build their business, sustained on their own, they should not be forced to stay at the back, they should be allowed to participate in the growing of the economy, they should be allowed to participate in building their own country and they should have access to education so that we have women in leadership in all levels, in professional levels and when I say women I am referring to women who understand that they are women beings, their human rights is very important, they don't have to be submissive for them to be able to achieve whatever they want to achieve in life. They should actually establish a policy that assists women to unleash their potential and contribute as woman beings towards building a better South Africa.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	<p>I like your expression "women beings", I think that's very powerful and listening to your comments it's about ensuring that rights are enshrined; that access to education is available; that women are not excluded from participating and making meaningful contributions both to the economy and also to society.</p>

<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Yes.</b>
DR. MALKA	Today we are talking to Mrs. Rosina Semenya who is a member of parliament and serves as Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
	<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 Mrs. Rosina Semenya who is a member of parliament and serves as Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	In the first half of the show Mrs. Semenya shared some of the work that the Portfolio Committee of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries performs, ranging from collaborating with other portfolio committees to passing legislation and providing a space for participation of civil society. We also spoke about her career and some of the components of growing up through the Congress Movement as a student youth activist, being led within particular structures of the ANC and ANC Women’s League; we also spoke about some of the components that hinder women’s progress in society, whether that is patriarchy and how to overcome those components, particularly through drive for greater education and access to meaningful roles in society.
DR. MALKA	Mrs. Semenya our programme “Womanity – Women in Unity” is all about gender equality which increasingly is a global focus, taking into the challenges and successes that women’s legal rights has had over the last few years; you mentioned in the previous segment of the conversation that legislation was a key driver. In your opinion as a member of parliament, do you think that 50/50 representation across the board is achievable?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>I believe it is achievable if we can introduce legislation that force particularly all political parties particularly in South Africa that participate in the elections, that their list must be 50/50 because for now the 50/50 is the legislation of the Congress Movement and is not affecting other political parties. If it can be legislated such that even if in the areas where other parties who are leading, that 50/50 should be implemented, it shouldn’t be dependent on the party, on the progressiveness of the party to have 50/50. So I think the key thing for me is the legislation, it can be achieved if we pass that legislation and the previous parliament through the Gender Commission, they have started the process of that legislation, I think before the end of this term, my belief is that that legislation will have come to parliament.</b>
DR. MALKA	Well speaking from our programme’s point of view “Womanity –Women in Unity” consider that to be very positive movement in the right direction and one thing that I have found again on the conversations that I’ve had with ladies that from a parliamentary point of view, from a public sector perspective, we really have strong representation of women but then when you look towards the corporate sector, almost the economic hub in the country that we have much lower representation of women, so given that role do you think that legislation has a role to play in trying to drive the agenda to increase women’s participation in the corporate world?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Yes, yes because my belief is that government as a main role player can be able to force all the sectors of society to implement the 50/50, so including in the corporate government so if we have the legislation every citizen has to be bound by that legislation to implement that legislation. By the way I think our constitution is the framework that allows that women should be</b>

	<b>treated as equal to their counterparts so you need just legislation which regulates all sectors towards getting 50/50 representation.</b>
DR. MALKA	And you're right, we have a very strong constitution and I think it is admired by other countries across the world and that we have a great passion and very ardent in terms of believing in equality and equal rights, but with legislation we have got to have implementation.
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Yes.</b>
DR. MALKA	Mrs. Semanya turning towards more of a personal perspective now, one of the questions that I ask my guests on this programme who've made tremendous achievements in their respective fields of work is about the factors that they feel have contributed towards their success. Some people speak about hard work; others talk about the role of their mothers as influences in their lives, in your opinion what have been some of the key drivers to your success?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Firstly it's commitment and hard work. Community contribution, you know if you get the support base of the community where you come from, in this regard the community of the Congress Movement, the family of the African of the Congress Movement has made me and other women in the Congress Movement to stand firm, to persist in working towards better South Africa and make sure that we mobilise women to participate in the struggle to liberate themselves. So for me the persistence, perseverance, tolerance and accept to be led because that's really critical for you to be....and as a woman you have to double, you need to be very strong for you to move within the hierarchy of the system.</b>
DR. MALKA	From what you are saying my key takeout is that it's not just at an individual level. As an individual you've had to work hard to prove your dedication and efforts, but you have relied on almost the enablers around you, the community whether that is direct family or family in the form of the Congress Movement, that it's this collective effort that has contributed towards your success.
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Yes.</b>
DR. MALKA	Can you tell us a few of the pivotal moments that shaped you in your life as you were growing up?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>As I've indicated that I was an activist in the...as a student in the student movement and joined the Youth Movement before the burning one of the things that shaped me was seeing some of the girls that we struggle with falling in the process. Falling because they were misled by the social relations, or relationships and seeing them being abused because they fought relationship with leadership and looking at those issues I then start to say look at myself and if I have to be a leader on my own rights, I have to hard work and not expect any favour from anybody and capacitate myself, work with others, accept to be led, those are the things that shaped my leadership and even to listen to other leadership and looking at those that came before, who were my leaders before, how they handled issues and how they've grown up in the movement and just follow their footsteps and where I struggle, ask and they help me and that's why I end up to be where I am because I looked at those that are already are within the system like your chairperson of the AU how, when she was the minister of health or when she was the leader in the ANC, how would she .....and those....the speaker, the present speaker of parliament, those are the people that motivate and build me in the process.....Ma Winnie Mandela.....and those are the people that showed me to say if they were able to make it in those difficult, difficult paths, I came very late in the 80's when things they were no longer hard as that before and these women</b>

	<b>they left their families, going outside the country and worked for the Congress Movement so those are the things that shaped me and listening to them attending political schools in the Congress Movement, those are the things that shaped me in general.</b>
DR. MALKA	So would you say, and listening to some of the icons that you mentioned a few moments ago, that having strong female role models and learning to lead by their examples have been a significant impact to shape you and make you who you are today?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Yes, yes.</b>
DR. MALKA	And reflecting back on your career could you please share with us what you would say has been the best lesson?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>For me the best lesson has been that you should never undermine anybody and you should by all time respect the area or the position that you have been deployed to because for me it's not a privilege, it's a calling working for your own community, so most of us when we are being elected, we forgot and the other lesson that I've learned is that respect pays. If you respect those that you work with them, so you earn that respect from them, then you'll then be able to lead them. Collective leadership, sharing, collectively working with others, sharing your views with others, for me it makes you a better person because you open yourself to be of assistance.</b>
DR. MALKA	Thanks for sharing those wise words, particularly in terms of having respect for everyone and not undermining anyone because in this environment and this world people are shaping themselves to become anything in the future. Mrs. Semenya we are coming to the end of the show and as this programme is broadcast across the African continent, in closing can you please use this platform to send a message of hope to all those women listening to us that perhaps due to circumstances gender equality might not be at the top of their list, but rather the daily struggle of taking care of their family, raising their children and putting food on the table for them is a more pressurising reality?
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>I would close by saying that...quoting one of the presidents of the Congress Movement which says that "the liberation of South Africa it will never be completed as long as the women of South Africa is not liberated" and again one of the icon's says "as you walk you find a mountain and you have to climb that mountain, as you climb that mountain you find another one. Our women must know that liberation would never come on the silver platter, wherever they are in social formation, in public service, in business, they had to work hard and fight for their space because we are the generation that was born within the patriarchal society, we found that the system is being entrenched in churches, in schools, at work, in societies so it's us that we must actually stand up, educate one another, educate our boy child so that they become a better husband, the better brothers to their sisters and the better man to their community. Thank you.</b>
DR. MALKA	Thank you very much for that important message, that life is full of challenges but it requires perseverance and I don't think anything that was ever worth it came easily.
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Yes, yes.</b>
DR. MALKA	It's been such a pleasure having you on our show today Mrs. Semenya, we wish you all the very best and thank you for joining us.
<b>MS ROSINA SEMENYA</b>	<b>Oh thank you very much Doctor and to your viewers and say to all our women that lets join one another and produce food for ourselves, for us to fight for food brings security and make sure that food is available on the table for our children and our society, thank you very much.</b>

DR. MALKA	Thank you.
	<b>PROGRAMME END</b>