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GUEST NAME: ELIF ÇOMOĞLU ÜLGEN - AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY TO SOUTH AFRICA, SWAZILAND AND LESOTHO

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
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 in studio today in Pretoria is Ambassador Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen who is the Ambassador of Turkey to South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho. Ambassador Ülgen is a career diplomat, she joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1993 after graduating from the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Ankara; she has worked in Dubai, Brussels, Geneva, Islamabad and now coming into the southern hemisphere of Africa. Welcome to the show Ambassador!
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Thank you, thank you very much.
DR. MALKA	You are presently Ambassador of turkey to, as I mentioned, Republic of South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho, can you share with us some of the work that you do as well as the responsibilities that come with holding this position?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Thank you very much, this is my first ambassadorial appointment so I'm really, as eager as I am I'm also excited, I'm enthusiastic; I arrived around four months ago and it was only two or three weeks ago we had the privilege and honour to submit our credentials to the president of South Africa, so now I'm fully fledged, you know, all hands-on on duties. Of course our embassy in Pretoria is one of the oldest Turkish embassies in the continent of Africa. We have established diplomatic ties with the Republic of South Africa by 1993 and the Embassy was opened there, equally, the South African Embassy was opened in Ankara. As I said it's one of the oldest but in the last decade Turkey has been pursuing a very comprehensive strategy towards Africa which also had it's positive, I would say, reflections on the number of Turkish embassies all through the continent. Today we have 39 embassies all through Africa, in the previous year's my predecessors were accredited to a number of Sub-Saharan African countries; today I have the privilege to represent my country in South Africa and then in Swaziland and Lesotho because in all the other neighbourhoods we have....I have my colleagues. Well....
DR. MALKA	That's impressive it's nearly 75% of the countries in the continent.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	It is...it is. Indeed the Turkish leadership is very keen to open up embassies in every African country because our strategy for Africa has been running full fledged for the last almost two decades I can say but particularly for the last 15 years now and it really specifies on African needs. We have a motto that is we really look forward and support African solutions to African problems and with that ideology we work as embassies together with a number of Turkish agencies; development agencies, humanitarian agencies, educational institutions in a number of African countries, particularly I can give you for example like the example of Turkish projects, on-going co-operation and collaboration in Somalia, in Sudan, in South Sudan we do a lot of work which is also highly appreciated by the international community and by the local populations. Well of course in

	<p>South Africa as I mentioned it is different because South Africa is a much more different country when compared to the rest of the African continent and our relationship with South Africa has always been one of a friendship and close co-operation. My biggest challenge, I think this was one of the sub-titles you had submitted me when we were preparing for this interview, what could be my challenge as I thought, indeed it is really...it is a challenging job by itself being an ambassador, but it is easy in a country like South Africa, very friendly, I have been very warmly welcomed by the local authorities, by the people of South Africa, there is no prejudices against Turkey, the Turkish people in this country, we have really developed a good friendly relationship, tourism figures are good enough but still I think particularly in a number of areas like trade, like investments we need...we need to do more and on that side I feel the responsibility is also on Turkey because Turkey has been in the last couple of years very heavily investing in Africa as I said so we are ready to do more also in South Africa that's really going to be one challenge for me, by the time I leave and I don't know when, I would really love to see the trade volume and the investment figures of Turkish people, Turkish entrepreneurs, Turkish trademarks, brands more visible in the South African market and also higher in the figures. Historically we also have very bonds that date quite back to the time of the Ottoman Empire when in 1860's upon the request of the then British Queen the Otttoman Emperor sent a religious scholar to the Cape just for the purposes of educating the Muslim communities at that time living in the Cape. This was The Afende family's ties are very strong in the Cape region and in South Africa, they still... thefamily remained in South Africa and since then of course his family has grown up there, we...I mean also as an ambassador I try to bring this more into the surface of everyday lives of South Africans because sometimes history is just laid back there where it stayed but when I read more about it I was really very, very I would say excited because there are so many things that bind us together and then the national struggle of course of South Africa, the struggle against apartheid, I always...the more I read about it and learn about it I make the resemblance between the Turkish national struggle which took hundred years ago, at that time you know when the empire was dissolved and the modern Republic of Turkey was born on the ashes of the empire, we really did have a similar fight against many imperial powers at that time, people suffered the same way. Also when you look at the role of women, of course hundred years ago and then some twenty five years ago, a little bit further, I was very much, I am very much impressed by the role of South African women they have played in their fight against apartheid, for example the date 9th August, I just study more and want to learn more and I really look forward to celebrate 9th August....</p>
DR. MALKA	It's a...and we....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGENin South Africa....
DR. MALKA	...I must say we celebrate not just the 9 th August but we dedicate the whole of August as women's month....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly it's the women's month and indeed I'm a little bit jealous as a Turkish.....
DR. MALKA	...well in a way you're an honorary South African being here...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...ah thank you, and for example another thing which I think I fell in love is this folk song which became like a motto of these days when women started their march towards the Union Building and they just started to sing a song

	in their of course local language but I know the English translation, “Now you have touched the women, you have struck a rock” believe me we have a similar saying/proverb in turkey because really touching women, hurting women is the worst thing that humankind do in the world because the woman is strong enough really to burn the world out for their...for humanity, for her but basically for her future and...
DR.MALKA	...and prospective generations....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly, exactly and this is what has happened in South Africa, the women’s role can never be underestimated and even today I see the very strong heritage that they carry and the strong role that they play, it’s very admirable, the representations at political level in real life, of course the problems come together with that, you can’t really see any society that is rid of the problems that come along when women....
DR. MALKA	...but it’s interesting in the parallel, so you spoke about the dynamics happening in Turkey almost a hundred years ago and it’s almost as though these are phases in the evolution of a democracy on what it has to go through, that those are the challenges....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly....
DR. MALKA	...that one confronts....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly. You see sometimes these challenges never end last year in Turkey just these days on 15 th July 2016 I was in Ankara myself when we have been through a terrible nightmare. There was a coup attempt, it was a literal shock we thought in Turkey in 2016 nothing like such characteristic could ever happen, but it happened and in Ankara...Ankara is a landlocked city that was the reason it was chosen as the Capital during the years of our national struggle. Our national parliament building was bombed, the presidential palace was bombed, the place that I was sitting was just across the national broadcasting company, I’ve seen people running in the street and being killed by.....by our own Turkish Military personnel, unfortunately it was a coup attempt held, you know, and the responsables were very unfortunately were Turkish people belonging to a cult, now we call them as a terrorist organisation.....Group, this thing happened and women, women like myselfwe went to the streets and even last year in 2016 we’ve seen the role of women, men and women, who just you know ignored their life just to save the democracy and today, actually next week, we will be commemorating all around the world in all of our embassies but also in Turkey we will just pay our respect and gratitude to all our martyr’s who had lost their lives in the fight for democracy and saving the nation, even as recent as last year,....
DR. MALKAI know, one year ago.....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...so this struggle goes on forever.
DR. MAKA	Turning towards more of your responsibilities in this capacity I was quite interested when you mentioned that there’s a significant of penetration of Turkish embassies across the country and I’d like it if you could expand on some of the collaborations or projects that you’re working on, you mentioned briefly that there’s work in Somalia...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...yes exactly...
DR. MALKA	...so if you can talk more about that please?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Ah ja Turkey has a very keen interest as I said to bring African solutions to African problems so in that sense we really look from a different angle when compared to many other countries perspectives, or I would say rather

	<p>indeed there's a very, very outstanding work, piece of work that was done by Zaire, the prominent think tank of South African International Relations Institution, there they compared the Turkish Development Programme in Somalia to the South African Development Programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I recently had read that report, very much impressed and very well done to everybody who had really spent efforts on this, there Turkey is looked upon as a sudden partner in terms of providing development aid for example, so we have really this very different perspective as I think I should once again underline the examples in Somalia. Somalia is a war torn country, it is unfortunately on the verge of being a failed state, they have perennial conflict but we can't leave Somalia as it is because it is a risk for the whole region, for the whole world but not only from a security perspective the Turkish government, the Turkish leadership looks with a very humanitarian perspective to Somalia, we also have very strong historical bonds with Somalia so that's why like a decade ago we decided to build up a very strong programme which then really could change things in Somalia and more or less we kind of find ourselves successful, of course it is a very long way to walk with the government of Somalia but the Turkish government will never leave them alone we are really, together with the international community of course, the international community is also investing here a lot. In South Sudan very, very recently so they had been fighting with the throats in Tanzania, in Kenya, a number of countries, in Guinea, in Senegal. The Turkish Development Agency TIKA is now becoming almost a brand in Africa, it's very unfortunate that they are still not yet in South Africa but the government has taken the decision that TIKA will soon open up a branch office also in South Africa which will then work very much closely with those communities, particularly vulnerable communities who really are in need of humanitarian, very basic needs like drinking water or like medical services for newborns, mothers, women. Of course it also relates to the economic developments that you have in your country, thanks God despite all this political turmoil we have been going through since last year the Turkish economy kept growing, even the last quarter of 2016 we have reduced the.....of 3.9 which is an impressive figure that compare to the region in</p>
DR. MALKA	...and for a developed country yes....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	<p>...exactly so it's always a priority for Turkey to share whatever he...she has with those who are really in need and in that sense we are also very much similar with what South Africa is trying to do in this part of the world, that's why I see a lot of potential and that's why also one of my challenges, and not a real challenge but efforts is to bring more context between South Africa and Turkey at every level.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So you're doing a lot of bridging, there's a lot of humanitarian work, improvements in terms of the trade links and economic components. Turning more towards the nature of "Womanity – Women in Unity" our programme is all about gender equality and you know during the course of the conversation we obviously highlight certain areas that are pertinent to the topic and one area which I found quite impressive within the African context is about drives in terms of having women empowerment and gender equality legislation and I wanted to find out from a Turkish perspective what is the state of gender equality?</p>
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	<p>It is also a very topical issue in Turkey, we have a ministry dedicated to the women issues and social affairs including family and children but very frankly when I see the situation and the legislative structure of South</p>

	<p>Africa, starting from your constitution, I think Turkey is not as strong as what South Africa has managed. This is also partly the debate in Turkey still rests whether women should really fight for their rights rather than being really given or granted I would say, things that are to some are still being considered as a positive discrimination. This debate intellectually is everywhere indeed, I remember when I was working at the UN we also had these kinds of debates but as a woman and considering myself as a strong woman because I have a career, I have a name, I can have my own decisions but I think even we must think about the least...the weakest of all in the society and from that perspective I see such legislation very valuable, as I said Turkey does have such legislation which protects the women but in a political sphere for example the debates about introducing quotas, this has been a long issue in the political sphere but finally, including with also the support of some of the women associations it was decided that quotas should not be introduced into the Turkish political system. But apparently it is really quite also frustrating in terms of comparing South African let's say parliamentary figures to the Turkish parliamentarian outlook in terms of gender equality, unfortunately currently Turkish parliament is really at a very lower level representing...has a female representation when compared to many European countries and particularly also in South Africa. I know the debate about the 50/50% maybe it's really for me it's a dream but why not we should work for that, but honestly as a woman myself and I really put the question to myself, intellectually my answer would be that if I want to take part in politics then I do work for myself and I know that there are opportunities in my country, everywhere for any woman just to climb up the ladder up in high. We've had female heads of governments in Turkey as well, we have a number of course Turkish female ministers but I think increasingly now there is a tendency in Turkey that many women do not feel themselves or are not interested in the political sphere. It is very unfortunate....</p>
DR. MALKA	...they don't identify with it....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	<p>...for example in the last decade we have an influx of women running for the posts of you know being...trying to become academicians, you know going to medical faculties so that they turn out to become medical doctors. I can give the example of the foreign ministry for example, the Turkish Foreign Ministry is one of the oldest institutions which we have inherited from the Ottoman Empire and it was always looked upon as a male institute, you know until the 1970's/1980's we only had male ambassadors, it was only in the beginning of 1980's we had our first female ambassador sent to Strasberg Council of Europe and since then it took really very so, almost two decades, twenty years we had only a few, three or four, but my generation we joined the ministry in the early 1990's and at the time of joining our promotions were always like 50/50; 50 boys and 50 girls...</p>
DR. MALKA	...so they were quite conscious of it...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	<p>...what happened at the end, after twenty years now Turkey has a very competitive figure in terms of female diplomats than compared to many of our European you know foreign ministries. Currently Turkey has more than 50 female ambassadors; I can tell you a number of them are in Africa. I have around 10 colleagues serving in Africa, female colleagues, Turkey has 39 embassies all through African continent and currently which are not retired 50 female ambassadors which is really an impressive figure for a country like Turkey who has come from 20 years ago with like one ambassador, female ambassador, today in 2017 we end up....this really is the desire of the women. I remember my generation, really we were very</p>

	eager, we pushed the system and as long as the system does not discriminate against you then you just go through it.
DR. MALKA	And did you find that because there were a significant number of you that that helped galvanise and drag you through...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly, exactly, exactly. One or two of us do not make a change, if you are a bunch then you will see the change, this goes also for the politics, I wait for that kind of an evolution in Turkish political system because we need a group of women but a quite strong good group of women who are really very eager to just break the taboo, it's not a taboo, as I said we have of course female and I'm very well connected to a few of them, one of them is indeed the representative because in the Turkish parliamentary system we have friendship groups, one of the female parliamentarians she's representing South Africa there and hopefully I look forward to bring her along to this country to meet her counterparts but ja, I think when compared legislatively we have to look upon to South African example more.
DR. MALKA	So almost bringing African solutions into Turkish scenarios...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...yes, into the Turkish sphere.
DR. MALKA	We chatted briefly about quotas and I took the point that it was not accepted within the Turkish realm but what do you think about legislation in relation to closing gender gaps, so whether that relates to pay, promotions or position?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Very important, this kind of legislation we have in Turkey. For the last...in the last decade Turkey has been of course very closely in a relation...Turkey is a candidate country for the European Union and this has been for the last fifteen years or so onwards and in that period we have done a lot of legislative work which aligns Turkish legislation with European Union legislation, so in that sense also there has been a number of new pieces of legislation introduced which talks about also the closure of the gender gap but also Turkey has even went beyond because I remember a couple of years ago, I'm a mother of three boys, at the time I delivered my first son, this was fifteen years ago, the legislation was in such a way that if you're a working mother, if you're a government officer you couldn't ask for maternal leave which would exceed a paid maternal leave which would exceed forty days, like six weeks. So at the first delivery I had only had the opportunity to be with my baby in the first forty days and afterwards I just return back to my job fulltime.
DR. MALKA	Otherwise you would lose the work or the position...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...no, I wouldn't lose the work but I would lose the money and of course the status because...
DR. MALKA	...your promotion and developing your career.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly my promotion. By the time I have delivered my second one, this was in 2006, the legislation had been amended, now Turkey is having one of the best maternal legislations in Europe which foresees four months paid leave and then an additional two months which is like adding up to...it is a period for feeding your child and everything, during that time you can enjoy half day, like you go to the work and then in the afternoons you are at home and then afterwards you can ask for another additional six months unpaid leave, which is...in which case you become unpaid but you don't lose your status. This of course made a lot of change, maybe it also encouraged me to make a third delivery but really these things also very much encourage women, working women especially because as a woman we want to do everything. Sometimes people come up with arguments like don't try to become a superwoman, don't try to do everything at all but I think it is

	in our nature that we are super creators, we really give birth, we become mothers, we become wives, we become really the people who take care of the elderly in the family then we do really a lot of work, we want to serve to our countries, serve to our companies and we want to do everything together, we want to be a nice host and hostess when it comes to hosting people at home, so this is in our nature, it is not really trying to become a superwoman or not but in that sense the legislative structure should really support the super nature of the female.
DR. MALKA	But it's also allowing you to embrace all the opportunities that you have...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly, exactly....
DR. MALKA	...and not restricting you to this....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...a lot of roles....
DR. MALKA	...yes we're multidimensional...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly, multidimensional, very much so.
DR. MALKA	That leads me onto a topic that I find quite interesting, it's a subject that I almost term as "man's hours" where I see the working world as being designed around a space which typically operates between the eight 'till five but as a result we almost have half of society losing the best multi-taskers, i.e. it's women from the workforce, due to traditional expectations for women to reform their work timetables according to their family needs, what's your view of that?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	I loved that question....
DR. MALKA	...yes?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...actually in your interview because I've been one woman I've been experienced all these man working hours in my career. I worked many years in Brussels at a Turkish mission to NATO and to the European Union, these are two bureaucratic big structures where really you can as an individual can't change the rules but you just become one of those who just participate. In NATO for example I was assuming very heavy military work and I was always sitting around a table with all men, sometimes in uniform, sometimes in suites but all men and it's the military organisation and we were all discussing very hardcore security military issues at a time when I was pregnant with my third one, I was eight months pregnant and around the table you know starting from morning hours until midnight, non-stop we were discussing the military operation of NATO that it was preparing to undertake in Libya for example and you know you can't really leave literally your seat. In those times I really kind of suffered but I didn't give up because I knew that if I had just left that seat another male colleague of mine would just fulfil that seat...
DR. MALKA	...and that's in a literal sense...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly but later on, a year after that I was consigned as Consul General in Dubai, of course at that time I was head of a mission and Dubai's work schedule was different because as a Consul General I had to socialise with the business people, with the Turkish community there so I had the opportunity to just reschedule my agenda. What I did I was waking up as early as you know the kids were going to the school, was going to my office, doing all my appointments, meeting all people and then at the time that the children were coming back from the school I was at home like let's say around afternoon hours four/five pm then we were having dinner together with them, I was able to give them their bath you know put them into their beds and then around seven-thirty/eight o'clock the evening schedule

	started for me because at the Consul General I had to do a lot of social presences you know, attending dinners/receptions, but it worked so perfect then I thought you know why don't we work like this even in places like NATO or other capitals or back at home even at the you know Ministry of Foreign Affairs normally in Ankara we work from eight until eight, which is like twelve hours working without a break and you really don't...literally there had been nights and days I hadn't seen my children because they were waking up early coming at the time I arrived they were already at their beds...
DR. MALKA	...of course...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...so but there should be really...I hope we can work on these things because it is the same energies that you spend and the same I would say businesswise you deliver the same amount of responsibilities that you're supposed to deliver but then because you manage the time better you'll have time for your children, for yourself as well but it is always a challenge, it will always remain as a challenge, the hours are manly. What can we do... so....?
DR. MALKA	Well I think exactly like the example you gave when you were in Dubai in terms of being able to restructure time to accommodate all of our needs because...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...I agree...
DR. MALKA	...as you say you can achieve everything within the same 24 hour cycle.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Exactly, exactly. Maybe in the corporate positions this is more difficult because like in also corporate companies also like places like international organisations but ja, maybe we should start thinking about these things because it really makes life better and the feedback is far higher and better.
DR.MALKA	And the reality is that with the technology we have at our...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...yes...
DR. MALKA	...disposal...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...sometimes this technology is killing us I remember my boys just warning me like mom stop you know sending out emails when you are sitting with us, this is a big problem.
DR. MALKA	So encroaching on.. on time that it's taking up.
DR. MALKA	You are listening to "Womanity – Women in Unity" on Channel Africa the African Perspective on frequency 9625 KHz on the 31 meter band, also available on DSTV, Channel 802. Today we're talking to Ambassador Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen who is the Ambassador of Turkey to South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho.
DR. MALKA	Ambassador one of the questions that I ask all my guests on this programme who've made tremendous achievements in their respective fields of expertise is about the factors that have contributed to their success, so some people speak about the hard work that they've invested, others talk about role models, can you tell us in your opinion what have been some of the key drivers to your success?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Well of course I thought about this question as well and I really don't want to be boring but the first thing that came to my mind, which I drew from my own experiences really, work hard, that is for sure you have to work hard even if you are a man or a woman or a child....
DR. MALKA	...it's a hygiene factor...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...it's a hygiene factor so you have to really be serious about everything, not that you know you of course have to have the time to have fun, enjoy yourself but always take things seriously, it will really at the end of the day

	<p>make your life easier and the second thing is I think don't shy away, always speak up and don't give up. I think these three things have been very important in my own personal life because you know as a girl, I had also a brother, in my family of course I was very lucky because my parents, particularly my father had really invested in me and so my parents...we were always encouraged to go to universities, to go to better schools, to have a better education and then to really take our roles properly in this society and me, I'm a little bit maybe an old school person but especially in countries like yours, in ours, not only your parents the society itself invests in you if you turn out to become a good person, a man or woman, for your own country then you'll pay back otherwise all the education, all the things that have been spent during your childhood on you are wasted. This is a little bit of an old school and me being a very prostate thinking but this is the mentality that I still have and I try to inject onto my children, you know if we are able to feed our children, give them a good education, they should be able to deliver it back for the younger generations, for the people, for the humanity, for their country, for themselves as well so my advice especially to younger girls and sometimes I'm also invited to speak, when I was in Turkey in the ministry to our younger colleagues and so on and so forth, of course when you look at your life it seems like oh it's a long, you know twenty/thirty/forty years away, no in fact it's not like that, when you're there at the moment where I do say and look at back it has been just you know went through in a glimpse. So spend your time very well, you have fun exactly, love, eat, enjoy, dance but at the same time do something which can then later on you can cherish and you can tell and you can be proud of and for that you will always have obstacles, life is not easy even for the most you would think richest or the most wealthy or the most famous people life is full of challenges. I think the ideal thing is really just to stand up, be stubborn, I was very stubborn on everything and don't give up, especially for women this works very much because you don't even need to be well educated, just to ask for your rights, ask for the things that as a young girl, as a young woman you have to have, ask for them don't shy away, people will always discourage especially young girls. When I look at even now with the classrooms there is always more pressure on the girls, that's how I feel in terms of an implicit discouragement. Don't be discouraged you can do everything your male friends can do that is really what I have experienced and the multi-tasking thing that we were talking, this is also proven I think physically that women's brain is very much available for multi-taskings I can also see it as the mother of three boys and you know comparing you know their brain to the girls, you know I ask them one thing to do at a time, if I keep asking couple of things they are just confused this equally goes to my male colleagues even my husband whom I very much respect, honestly. This multi-tasking 'tis, it's very important, also when you're in a working life in business you see the difference between you know people, between genders.</p>
DR. MALKA	I think that's an important dynamic.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	I'm a very sexist speaker you see, I apologise from all my male colleagues that are listening but this is how I see.
DR. MALKA	You're just highlighting a skill which...
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...exactly, exactly...
DR. MALKA	...which is inherent to many women. We've just spoken about those success factors, can you share with us if there've any particularly strong women in your life that have impacted on you?

AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	That's very true. Yes of course my mother, my grandparents....grandmothers, they have as I said they have struggled themselves in their lives and they have just brought us up as equal partners, even sometimes more equal than our brothers and male cousins and there is yet another woman in my life which I would like to highlight, she is the nanny of my children. Our paths just crossed coincidentally, she was a woman a Turkish woman older than me but life has treated her very bad you know she was betrayed by her husband after you know delivering twenty years of marriage and you know she left him and get a divorce without getting a penny so all of a sudden she kind of found herself without nothing...
DR. MALKA	...destitute....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	...and somehow in those days our paths crossed. I was looking for a nice Turkish lady who could look really take care of my newborn and I was getting a posting abroad so I wanted to bring her with me so she decided to join the family, she is with us for the last fifteen years. I have seen...and still of course by the time she...at that time she was not even speaking to none of his family...her family members because she asked for a divorce of that horrible husband most of her family members refused to talk to her, this is a very typical issue in you know societies like ours. So in the last fifteen years she really build up this relationship with this children, of course not with the husband but she still is a very strong woman, I kind of when I look at her and she is basically one of the main reasons I have three children in such a career so that's why when I look at her I see really...I see hope...a lot of hope in women, particularly in Turkish women as well. There are so many examples like her everywhere I believe.
DR. MALKA	And I would say dependency and the women's network a way to allow...you've got that supportive infrastructure to enable you to do the job that you do.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Exactly but I think anybody, even a woman like her, she hadn't had a job, she hadn't had a penny but she was able to survive you know somehow of course there was a coincidence that...but there are so many other good examples, lessons learned that maybe we should build on this and I think losing hope is the worst thing that can happen to a human being, particularly to a woman, we must never lose our hope because life is full of surprises and the women instinct is making these things happen easier.
DR. MALKA	Ambassador we are unfortunately running out of time....
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Ahh, it was a lovely talk...
DR. MALKA	...can I please ask you as we close out to share a few words of inspiration or wisdom which you would like to pass onto women who are listening to us today?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Oh thank you. At the beginning of this interview I made this reference to this folk song which I really...I always have it on my mind like "now you've touched the woman you've struck a rock" I think this word can become and insp...this whole sentence is an inspiration for us, we shouldn't let anybody touch us in the way that we don't want them to touch us, both physically but also mentally because as women we look very naive, we look quite vulnerable physically but indeed we are very strong. We are very strong by heart, we are very strong mentally as you said genetically, physically so we should always think of those strengths that we have and if something bad happens to us against all odds we should never give up, stand up, talk about it, go over it, try to come over it and make other people hear about the situation. It is not maybe...it does not look very

	<p>inspirational but these things have always been my mottos, even in a work day you can spend a horrible day, you can have some fights with your bosses, you can have your ideas being killed with other people, but don't give up there is always a way where you can put things in another way and make your desires to come true and I do believe this is true for all women in the world. Of course not all of us have the same opportunities that's why people like us have to do more for others and I'm ready to do my share and it's this vision that I really look forward to do also some work in South Africa particularly also the responsibility rests with me as the first female Turkish ambassador in this country, I really look forward and I really am eager to be part of any project that can really touch the everyday lives of ordinary women in this country.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And on that note I must say that from "Womanity – Women in Unity" we will support you in any way we can in terms of those initiatives as the first female ambassador of Turkey to South Africa.</p>
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	<p>Thank you.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So thank you very much for sharing your time with us and relaying your stories, experiences and expectations and hope for the future.</p>
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	<p>Thank you very much.</p>
	<p>PROGRAMME END</p>