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PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: NOMAINDIYA MFEKETO DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION

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 South Africa's Deputy Minister of International Relations and Co-Operation, Nomaindiya Mfeketo; she is a member of Parliament, a Chairperson of the African National Congress Caucus from 2008; a member of the ANC National Executive Committee since 2007, she was also the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly from 2009 through to 2014 and additionally she served as Executive Mayor of the City of Cape Town. Welcome to the show!
DM MFEKETO	Thank you very much, thank you very much for having me.
DR. MALKA	Deputy Minister you've served South Africa for many years and in that period you've held a variety of positions; can you share with us a few of the landmarks in your career?
DM MFEKETO	Well thank you very much, I think let me start why I ended up there. I learned from many, many strong women in South Africa, all of them without fail were members of the ANC before it was banned and when it was banned they didn't stop teaching the different generations. I was only 8 years when the ANC was banned but we had, you know, in all areas there were people – women and men – and in my case there were these women who are always guiding you, even when we were not the right age to be part of their organisation.
DR. MALKA	So it was almost osmotic; you didn't know consciously what was happening....
DM MFEKETO	...no...
DR. MALKA	...but it was part of you....
DM MFEKETO	...part of, you know, women were coming to our house and everything and in the neighbourhood, I mean there was a true....this concept of a child is raised by a community was always there, it was not only my mother and my father, the whole community, so I think as time goes it was obvious for some of us that you will join the progressive forces, you have the support and I think what was happening in the country at that time; it's either fear or a conscious of the justice that needs to happen that....
DR. MALKA	...a moral duty...
DM MFEKETO	...yes...that pushed people into different areas and I know it's not all of us who grew up at that time, who when they were at high school experienced what apartheid government was doing; you must learn just to be a good domestic worker, you must learn Afrikaans, all other language must be silenced; somehow I've gone through those things and then when 1976 broke up the students, that activity that started the formal mobilisation of youth and women quietly because even that, you know, it was the culmination of the work that was done underground and this is where formally I started joining the women's organisation that was called 'United Women Organisation' and with those women who were very, very strong,

	<p>very brave and you know moral conscious that was there; what is it that we're supposed to be doing; what is it that we're not supposed to be doing. So my foundation is the fact that I joined at a time where there were no accolades to give people who are doing what they're supposed to do. We were always told that there are two ways here; when you do this you need to commit because you must expect to die or be in jail, those are the two....so most people were not joining because those are the two options. There was nothing about oh one day you'll be a deputy minister, one day you'll be a mayor, we didn't even think about that.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>I heard an expression just yesterday where someone said "if it's worth dying for, then it's worth living for"....</p>
DM MFEKETO	<p>...ja, ja...no that's true, that's true and this is where it brings all the moral obligations of if I don't do this, even myself, my children, generations to come, will not see the freedom that we're fighting for.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>It's a serious responsibility...</p>
DM MFEKETO	<p>...it is....</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...and so that was the foundation...</p>
DM MFEKETO	<p>...that was the foundation...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...moving ahead; what would you say have been significant moments?</p>
DM MFEKETO	<p>Well you know I work in many service organisations and NGO's and of course I chose the progressive one, that for me where also lessons on what is it that needs to be done, not necessarily preparing for when liberation comes, but you know just working with communities and that; I think that paved the way...because my very first government sort of position was when I was asked from an NGO, asked to be part of negotiating as the negotiations were happening at a national level there was a local government that, as you know, completely divided into small areas and fractured with the policies that were separating people instead of, you know, integrating people, so we had to discuss how do we bring together all those small municipalities; in Cape Town I think there were about 126 because Bellville had its little... Pinelands had its little, you know, all small areas they were sort of self-governing and then you have all the non-white groupings having just community counsellors who had no power whatsoever. So this is where I started in '92, heading the committee that deliberate and it was my first time, in fact, when I started I was sort of very worried about how is it going to turn out being a woman and the chair of the negotiating committee, when in fact clearly we're coming from the apartheid side, there's still those attitudes and we haven't even finished or complete the negotiations at a national level, but all we know organisation were unbanned, Madiba was out of prison and we were preparing to become the South Africa that we all longed for. That's where I started, at the end of that term 'round about '94, everybody after the elections we were all excited, then everybody went to parliament and I was screaming, saying hey local government is the most important sphere of government, more than parliament because this is where the people are, this is where your strength in changing communities is supposed to be, but you know in most cases I mean people were sort of you won't be a minister if you are in local government, of course, you'll only be a counsellor. But for me that was the most fulfilling area of my life compared to any other deployment because there you deal with communities direct, there you can implement certain things that changed the lives of people.</p>

DR. MALKA	And see the impact in a...
DM MFEKETO	...yes and you see..
DR. MALKA	...really meaningful way...
DM MFEKETO	...you see the impact immediately and you are able to change it; yes there are challenges because the turn-around from what the country was and what you want to do, it's taking a long time because of you know the structural challenges...
DR. MALKA	...it's complex and there's never...
DM MFEKETO	...complex...
DR. MALKA	...one black and white line to follow, there's always another hurdle which comes in which is unaccounted for...
DM MFEKETO	...and also it's caused by the fact that whilst you're doing the transformation and changing you also have the important task of building one nation, you know this whole thing of expectation, because there were lots of expectations that when Madiba is released from prison, when we go for election and win election because we're more than 80%, for other people it meant you will go and take Constantia, you will go and take the farms and do that, which is far from the truth because the whole process was we're building a new South Africa, yes that equality, that non-racialism and all that goes with it must be part of what you keep on doing.
DR. MALKA	It sounded like a very challenging time to manage multiple expectations and to develop the cohesion and unity.
DM MFEKETO	It was.
DR. MALKA	And skipping ahead now to your current portfolio and role; in your line of work you travel extensively to different countries and in that I'm sure you've had the opportunity of being able to see to what extent gender equality rates in those different countries; what lessons would you say we should take from countries that are getting it right in gender equality?
DM MFEKETO	Well I think there are lessons in few countries; Rwanda would count as one of those countries that were able to sort of really practically talk about gender equality and I mean Nordic you know countries also but having said that, South Africa being a young democracy, I think we've done well, consciously you might not see it because when you talk about other countries it doesn't....even Rwanda to some extent, because the gender equality is not just seeing me in a particular position, it's...you must gauge that by the level of women in that country...
DR. MALKA	...so we're looking through the entire pyramid...
DM MFEKETO	...yes...
DR. MALKA	...not just within a sliver of it...
DM MFEKETO	...whilst representation is important because you're helping the young ones and other people to see if that person who's a woman like me can be there, it means I can go there, but more than anything for lawmakers, it must be something you measure qualitatively with what is it that is happening; do you encourage young girls to play with poppie dolls instead of driving cars; do you encourage that gender equality at that level, what about ordinary women because gender equality is not only for those who are educated, it must also be for ordinary women, the laws that you pass, the teachings that you do at school and in every sector we still have a situation where you talk about gender equality and if there's a law you go to countries, yes there's gender but that is a fake gender of, you know, you take the weak women

	and put them there or you took wives and relatives and that, put them there, because you still want to maintain that you know male dominance...
DR. MALKA	...so it's window dressing in a way...
DM MFEKETO	...definitely. Its window dressing in some instances and by doing that at times you're not doing justice to gender equality...
DR. MALKA	...of course not...
DM MFEKETO	...because once you put people like that what you'll always get is those kind of people bang the door behind them...
DR. MALKA	...but then it's also a reflection of well this is someone who's been put in this position who is not equipped, who is just a figurehead but yet if it is a woman it's going to reflect badly on all women who come after her....
DM MFEKETO	...oh ja...
DR. MALKA	...that she is...
DM MFEKETO	...oh ja...
DR. MALKA	...this is what a woman can do but the reality is she is not a representation of their capability....
DM MFEKETO	...ja...
DR. MALKA	One of the things that I've found increasingly in the last few months is that there's lots of inter-country, inter-regional co-operation, it tends to be a prevailing theme. We had SADC hosting their 37 th Summit where they spoke about partnering with the private sector in developing industry and regional value chains; there was the Indian Ocean Rim Association where their theme was uniting the peoples of Africa, Asia, Australia and the Middle East through enhanced co-operation for peace, stability and sustainable development and the messages that I see coming through are looking at economic sustainability, but also about the environment to ensure that we have economic sustainability. Can you share with us a bit more of South Africa's foreign relation policies in respect to connecting private sectors across country borders' for job creation?
DM MFEKETO	Thank you very much I mean that's an important question. You know we're part of the global community as South Africa and this is the beauty of, you know, freedom or liberation because you are able to learn from other countries. Now we must start as all countries do; we must start from our own region, we are a country in Africa and if we don't form those strong relations with countries in Africa to make it easy for the continent to trade with each other, to acknowledge the power that we have because we have the minerals, not only in South Africa, all over; we won't do it right, so yes we're part of that continent of ours where we speak with one voice. When I go to Middle East, when I go to Asia or any other region, I'm not only speaking for South Africa, I speak...when I talk about trade, when I talk about economic diplomacy, when I talk about investment that needs to happen I talk about the region which is the African continent and then that's the first one but it goes beyond that. The part of what we're doing besides or in addition to forming relations with different countries because we are a global community, key to that is a good working relationship that would equip our communities that would build bridges but also, more importantly, that would be able to invest in each other's country. So the fact that now this year we're chairing IORA is something that for us....we'll chair IORA for two years, hopefully by then we must have at least strengthened women in South Africa, women in the region, but in all those countries that are part of the Indian Ocean Rim, even beyond and there are great opportunities because we're focusing on lots of environmental issues

	now but also we're focusing on what is it that we can benefit, you know, from the Indian Ocean....
DR. MALKA	...the Blue Ocean economy is a big component....
DM MFEKETO	...yes it is and I mean if we do it right we stand to gain a lot from that.
DR. MALKA	Very significant and as you've mentioned this is also about the empowerment of women through these dialogues and interactions, but another area that I tapped into on the introduction of this question is that there is significant work underway to address conflict resolution and ensure stability and more often than not, women and children, who tend to be the vulnerable members of society are most impacted, so whilst we've got the economic development and all of us driving forwards and ahead; can you comment a little bit in terms of how we're managing the conflict resolution in particular regard to women?
DM MFEKETO	In fact we focus, there's a dedicated department in DEKO where we train women as peace keepers, because you'll agree with me that when it comes to sending delegation after delegation envoys to different countries, let alone South Africa because we haven't taken those women into all areas of conflict but we do train peacekeepers, both from South African women and the continent and we have partnership with countries like Sweden, Denmark and Norway that are doing the same and the whole purpose is exactly to be able to go to an area, if there's a peacekeeping force in Sudan, as you are saying, what we always or in any other country what we see would be whenever there's a war the women of that country are the most vulnerable to what is happening, not only by those people in their country but even the outside peacekeepers that are supposed to be coming to make peace in that country. So the intention really is assist in sending those women there so that they become peace envoys in those countries with their knowledge. It's a programme that is closer to my heart because I see it as not only as something that happens during war, but I see it as something that we need to own in South Africa where we are able to resolve conflicts amicably because somebody can have a knowledge of facilitating how we resolve our conflicts in communities. Now because if we do that properly we would never have service delivery unrest in different areas; we can dispatch those people, they talk to communities, they facilitate the meeting between communities and the municipalities and there won't be destroying of infrastructure that has been built with huge monies.
DR. MALKA	It's certainly an important skill and as you say prevention is far better than looking at the after effects when that devastation does occur.
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to South Africa's Deputy Minister of International Relations and Co-Operations, Nomaindiya Mfeketo.
	AD BREAK
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 South Africa's Deputy Minister of International Relations and Co-Operation, Nomaindiya Mfeketo. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter: @WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	Deputy Minister I must say that in this programme we've seen many remarkable women like you and I often wonder if these women who have contributed so much to society in many ways to bring about positive change and you've highlighted some of the examples of the work that you have done in local government; the dispatching of peacekeepers, being women into different territories for conflict resolution; if we had focused on gender equality in a big way that perhaps collectively, perhaps it's wishful thinking from my side, that we would have been able to have eradicated and made gender inequality a scar

	of the past; what's your view?
DM MFEKETO	You know it's not as easy as that. I think we've done our bit and maybe it's something that needs to be done in small bites at a time. I think there's so much, I mean we've established that consciousness, what is important for me is that we've established the consciousness in different sectors, even private sector, where people are able to look amongst themselves and see if there's a gender balance wherever they are. So have we work hard, I don't think we've worked that hard but definitely we've done what we can do and is there consciousness amongst the different generations that comes behind us? I would say yes. I think because of the role that was played by many, many women before us in our generation, I am confident that today if you are even talking to an 8 year old girl, my granddaughter is 8 years, my granddaughter will never be bullied by a young boy of that age, you can see even just....when she comes back and talks about what's happening at school and that, you can see that generation of young women, they are not even going to stand what at some stage was guided by cultural practices of where women should be at a particular time, now already because of social media and everything and everything, they are there and they demand to be recognised as women or young girls who can do....there's...I mean my granddaughter always says but this boy's think we can't do what they are doing. We know we are equally capable to do whatever, so I think that society is changing.
DR. MALKA	It's so uplifting to hear that coming out of this next generation which is the future of the country that she is totally wired in a different way, that she hasn't got any misconceptions about her abilities, she is confident, she's self-assured.
DM MFEKETO	Ja. No, no, no it's....and I think we need to keep as older sisters, as parents, as society, we need to keep encouraging that, that even the sky is not a limit and it starts from small things because if we ignore that level and start giving young girls dolls to play with, teaching them how to bake and that, not how to fly an aeroplane or how to be an engineer and fix this car and all those things we need, then they will slowly or unconsciously, you know, prepare themselves for motherhood or whatever.
DR. MALKA	Influencing early childhood development is so important and I hear it time and time again where people have talked about the role of their parents influencing their lives and they hadn't realised it 'till they'd already started their careers of... it's almost positive brainwashing.
DM MFEKETO	Yes and it starts there.
DR. MALKA	Now in your opinion, given your experience and exposure, what areas do you think we need to build on the most to benefit women optimally in the future?
DM MFEKETO	I think there's a lot, let me start there. There are many, many women of different generations who are really trying to do something for themselves. I know there's a group that is busy trying to create a women's bank from not only South Africans but the whole continent; I'm speaking at that conference later this month and these are ordinary citizens, ordinary women, other's were public servants or were in private sector, so they are getting together and say you know we need to assist women. I think what women of different levels and different economic situations need most is an ear to listen to their challenges but also an assistant because others just need to be....they have the modem...they need to be assisted with maybe just opening that door for financial start-ups or whatever, but more than that, I think there's nothing worse than not being listened to and you have to kick the doors for people to listen to you.

DR. MALKA	That is certainly one of the challenges that people confront, particularly when they're looking at starting up a new business venture because there's so many unknowns, misconceptions and it's very challenging so having an ability to be heard and help.
DM MFEKETO	Ja, ja and I think my...really my take would be but don't ever give up. Don't ever give up I mean just continue banging that door, it will open one day.
DR. MALKA	And if it doesn't a window will...or something else will give.
DM MFEKETO	Ja, ja.
DR. MALKA	Turning more towards a personal perspective, one of the questions that I ask all my guests on this show who've made tremendous achievements in their respective fields of expertise is about the factors that have contributed to their success. Some people speak about the role of an organisation or people in their lives or values of hard work and perseverance; in your opinion what would you say have been some of the key drivers to your success?
DM MFEKETO	I think it starts from home. It starts from home; the lessons that you..and values that you are given when you grow up, you know when I grew up I thought my parents were very strict about certain values that, you know, you must cherish but soon, I mean as I grew up I realised that these are important stepping stones for whatever you want to do in life and it prepares you for the organisation as well because if values of integrity, values of conscious and clean conscience and humility and knowing that you serve, more than lead, you serve people, those for me are you know certain values that wherever I go I test my ability from those values and I want to sleep peacefully at night because I've done certain things and they sit well with my conscience.
DR. MALKA	Can you share with us a few of the pivotal moments in your life growing up?
DM MFEKETO	Well I mean there are many of them, as I said earlier, we grew up in a country where there were many, many of people who were always worse than you, you know, I think my parents tried very hard with all the situation and circumstances prevailing at that time, to raise us in a comfortable environment, protecting us from all the ills of the country so that we don't have that negativity, which was good. I think some of the things that happened when I was young; I think I was 8 years old when the seat of injustice was planted into my mind. Armies surrounding where were just moved to, that forced removal, moving us from one area and leaving all your friends, beautiful house and I still remember, I mean I laugh afterwards when I was old, I was missing...the one thing I was crying for are the friends I left behind in Elsie's River and the berry trees that were near home and every time coming home from school I'll go and get lots and lots of berries and we'll sit down and all kinds of berries, that's where they were, we'll sit down and eat berries. Now...but coming to this area, it was during the state of emergency in the '60's...1960; I was 8 years old and...but all the houses, because there was a strike, all the houses were surrounded by the army but I think for me was looking at these guys, they were about 18/19, they were not that old and our fathers were old and they were hiding under the...in the cupboards and everywhere else and this sense of injustice I felt was but how can my father when he's this old...I took it as a child as if my father is scared of this young man who's carrying a gun next to our house. Why is he carrying a gun to older people and that and you know white and that, so I mean some of those things were planted even being involved were planted by those small incidents that as a child you think no this is unfair but it's happening nonetheless and it's only later

	that you associate it with the colour and the apartheid and all those things, which is something that is not supposed to happen and I admire our kids now, growing up in an environment where they talk about Piet...they meet...they sit next to and they don't know; it's us who poisoned them with you know that; they don't know apartheid.
DR. MALKA	It's the way it should be.
DM MFEKETO	Yes, yes.
DR. MALKA	Those are certainly challenges to have overcome and I would say when you were conducting all of the work that you were doing as an important point of departure on how you balance the outcomes that we had to have an integrated society.
DM MFEKETO	Yes and I still feel there's no other way, there's no other way. We still have lots of work to do. I mean we've seen the farm march, which was good because other people are protesting but you see if it just had an element of uniting everybody because now you have lots of people talking about it because you know they didn't act as South Africans, it was as if oh it's because there's a new South Africa, we long for the old South Africa and it sort of you know and the part of what I was saying about you do, you transform but you must never forget that you're still building this young democracy into a fully fledged democracy where we won't see the colour at all.
DR. MALKA	Its scars of the past.
DM MFEKETO	Ja, you are right.
DR. MALKA	Deputy Minister we are unfortunately running out of time, can I please ask you to share a few words of inspiration or wisdom which you'd like to impart to young ladies that are listening to the show?
DM MFEKETO	Ja, I think important in all...everything that you do, for me, find that little thing that you are very passionate about. I was saying earlier, you know, when we were introduced into this work we were told there are only two things, you're detained or you die and we've experienced all those except dying. Now but because for me it was something that I...something that was my life and the passion was what would come....it's a pain today but you know at some stage things wouldare going to be okay. So I mean to young women out there I think ifdon't just take whatever you...is presented to you. If you are passionate about doing something then it will be very easy to do; you will sleep and wake up thinking about what you're doing and whatever, this is not about politics, whatever field, if you are a sports person, if you are a business, if you are doing an artist, if that is your line, do it with all your heart and also knowing that the generation younger than you out there will learn from what you're doing if you're doing it passionately.
DR. MALKA	Thank you for that wonderful message, pursue your passions whole heartedly because it not only affects you as an individual but it affects the future thereafter. Thank you very much for joining us.
DM MFEKETO	It's a pleasure, thank you for this interview.
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