

PROGRAM DATE: 2019-04-18

PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: MS LOIDE KASINGO – DEPUTY SPEAKER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF NAMIBIA

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 today at the Pan African Parliament in Midrand, South Africa, is Ms Loide Kasingo from Namibia where she has been a member of parliament since 1996. She has been Chairperson of the Committee on the Constitutional and Legal Affairs from 2005 to 2010; she served as Deputy Minister of Home Affairs from 2000 to 2005; Deputy Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing from 1990 to 2000 and she has been Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia since 2010 and previously she served at the Pan African Parliament as Vice President representing the Southern African Region. Welcome to the show!
MS KASINGO	You're welcome, thank you. Good day everybody.
DR. MALKA	Ms Kasingo, according to your bio you joined SWAPO in 1975 and when I looked at this you seem to have worked and touched almost every section of the machinery that makes things work; from being in the treasury, to being in education, justice, workers unions.
MS KASINGO	Exactly, but what has really influenced my life is respect everybody irrespective of the level of consciousness in terms of education is when I was involved in the Trade Union Movement. During that time it teach me to respect human beings, to respect women, to respect everybody, regardless their level of education of what the person has and I should think it's the basis of me preparing to me where I am in politics.
DR. MALKA	I'm sure there must have been a lot of empathy development within yourself so that you can really relate to people. Now that you're in your current role as Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia, could you tell us a little bit more about the work that you do and the responsibilities that come with that position?
MS KASINGO	Okay, as a Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Namibia, quickly you might recall that in Namibia we are bi-..... We have got a national council consisting of representing from the regions and we have got National Assembly which is the first legislature to make law and they will refer it to the National Council for review. It's a job I like, although it's full of challenges. When you sit there as Madam Chair it's very difficult to accommodate everybody, in particular from different political parties, but I manage.
DR. MALKA	And I also read that some of your interest areas that you've got a special focus on worker's rights, on labour, youth and women issues, as well as the African Union and its organs.
MS KASINGO	Ja, exactly and in particular the workers and also the challenge facing Africa. When I joined Pan African Parliament more than ten years ago, I realised that there is a big huge challenge in Africa in terms of women upliftment, in terms of empowering youth and also to ensure that Africa's natural resources is benefiting it's people. Here at Pan African Parliament we debate and recommend very useful recommendations but unfortunately

	we are just a talk show, up to now we don't have the power to make law to bind our national parliament or national state in the continent.
DR. MALKA	And do you find after participating in these sessions, after having...I'm sure there must be an appreciation for tremendous diversity from people from every country that you come together, you brainstorm; how can you ensure that it doesn't just remain a talk shop, that you can take back those concepts and have them invested into the countries?
MS KASINGO	Ja at times you are challenged and you take some of the...some of the debate home to ensure that they're probably...your national assembly is implementing them, but here at Pan African Parliament we want at least to make model law so that in specific issues we, all the African continent can follow that model law; for example the movement of people, that is easy to make model law of and also the health issues. Health doesn't know boundary, it doesn't know nationality, but unfortunately we are struggling to ensure that the protocol which will give the Pan African Parliament power to make law is only 6 member states who signed and ratified, and I was told also somehow 11 who signed but not ratified. We are still far because to ensure that the protocol goes into motion it should be ratified by 27 plus one member states of AU. So, as a PAP member we are struggling to convince our head of state, to convince our relevant governments to ratify that particular protocol.
DR. MALKA	And it seems like it's a slow moving machinery because you meet relatively infrequently but to shift the line to get 27 plus one; that's a hard ask.
MS KASINGO	It is, it is very, very, very hard, but the bureau....the bureau of PAP, the president with the other vice president will work out a strategy to visit region to region to convince. I should think there is a fear in the member state to lose their power; to lose their independence but during our term, when I was vice president during 2012-2015, we have done our level best to convince them, as a result that was the birth of what we call Malabo Protocol or PAP protocol which was adhered to it by the head of state in Malabo 2014. In that, although we wanted the PAP to have the power to legislate, we changed it so that we can allay the fear of the member state and in terms of that protocol, it's only power to make model law and we are not asking more than that.
DR. MALKA	So there have been successes, which is wonderful.
	AD BREAK
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to Ms Loide Kasingo who is the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia. We're here at the Pan African Parliament and you're listening to 'Womanity – Women in Unity'.
DR. MALKA	We've spoken about sort of the governance of being able to move things around; what would you say in relation specifically to women's upliftment and empowering youth, what would you say have been some of the outcomes of the conversations this week?
MS KASINGO	Okay, before I go to this week's conversations, let me just tell you that at the PAP we have got a caucus which is called Caucus on Youth. It's called Caucus on Youth because although the leadership is youth MPs but anyone who has got youth in mind although you are a senior, you can join them. Ja the deliberation of this week, we have workshops on refugees, internally displaced people and democracy...electoral democracy. All those topics touch about women, for example, when it comes to the conflict, when it comes to internal displaced persons, when it comes to immigration, women are the most to suffer. They are the majority, they are also the most to suffer and henceforth the call from this Pan African Parliament to sensitise our member state, those who didn't come up with a law, to make law to

	<p>protect the refugees as well as to protect the internally displaced people and in particular the women and girl children in that setup. As well as also to ensure, for example, you cannot talk of the economic upliftment without also debating on the climate change. The debate was also that women are also victims of climate change and I recall that at any level, whether grassroots level, the women are there to gather food to feed their family, but at the same time when it's a drought they are also the people who will suffer.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Whilst we are on the topic of women and aspects that are influencing women, so refugee status, displaced persons, looking at agriculture, looking at climate; what about the role of technology, has that come into any of the conversations?</p>
MS KASINGO	<p>Ja, technology has come in terms of education; quality education, generally for the youth and also in particular for the girl children students because the debate was also that within, for example, selected refugee camps, it was argued not general but in specific situations we found out that the girl child only attends up to the primary level and when they graduate, in certain countries, certain situations, they are not accepted in secondary level. Henceforth when we go back we should sensitise our parliament. When the ratified UN Convention in 1951 related to refugees, our respective governments should not make reservation, they should ensure that even the refugee children should get public education, public...the right to take part in public schools.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're so right and education is...it's a critical tool in the hands of anyone but more so in a woman's hands. UNESCO, I think, have done numerous studies where they said that every year a girl goes to school, it equates to a 10% yield in terms of the income she makes. She has the knowledge, the know-how to look after a family, to reduce child mortality, to improve on benefits, so education all round is so important. Turning towards more of a home-front for you in Namibia, I saw that there was a dramatic increase in the representation of women in the National Assembly, growing from 24% in 2009 to 47% in 2015 and I understand that in part that's due to parity; so putting interventions in place on parity roles; you're a lady leader, your prime minister, your deputy prime minister are all women leaders and I think that when women occupy prominent positions in government you serve as role models to other women of what's possible, you serve as role models to men of what is possible for women and having this gender representation, it's important for policy development as well as implementation. Can you share your thoughts?</p>
MS KASINGO	<p>Yes, thank you. Even here, during the debate, we debate on it, we debate on how should we increase to increase to ensure the participate in recognition at the high level of politics and the majority of us, all of us, we agree that the political parties, in particular the ruling party, has a major role to play. For example, in Namibia, I belong to the ruling party, SWAPO Party and we have come up with a Zebra System. We are going for the poll in November, in South Africa I understand is in May, we ensure before that we in the National Assembly we go there on the party list. As a ruling party we have got two lists; women lists, men lists and from there and that's why you find an improvement of the representation of women in parliament and here we have also...there were a number of us who share that and in November the session of PAP was Kigali, Rwanda; what a wonderful example in Africa....</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...women...</p>
MS KASINGO	<p>...women...and we ask them then they said they will, political will of the president himself and they themselves and the harsh experiences they got during the genocide and they voted to say enough is enough and I was told</p>

	that whenever they meet women, they don't exclude men. Whenever they talk the problem of women, men are also there, probably those are some of the good examples in Africa we have to emulate.
DR. MALKA	Rwanda is an example to the entire world and you're so right; our continent, we do have to emulate. Staying with women in leadership; building female leadership capacity is important, as we've just said, for the various reasons, but yet there are so few political leaders. I look...Australia had a female prime minister, we had Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, we had Joyce Banda, we had Ameenah Gurib-Fakim of Mauritius and now we've got Sahle-Work Zewde of Ethiopia, you've had strong leadership in Namibia; do you think more countries are ready to have more female presidents/prime ministers?
MS KASINGO	I should think they have...to where I come from I should think Namibia is also ready to have a woman as a president. You might recall that our vice president of the ruling party is a woman Cde. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwa who is also in charge of Foreign Affairs and you will also recall that the prime minister is a relatively young woman, in the fifties and those are the women we are looking and I hope, probably, come after 5 years, we are likely to have a woman president and I should think the other African countries must also like some but.....the resistance is there and I should think we have to work hard, not only to convince the males but also within us to trust our fellow women that they can also be leaders like anybody like me.
DR. MALKA	What I admired about your Deputy Prime Minister is that she wears two caps....ah three caps; Vice President of the Party, Deputy Prime minister and Foreign Affairs and I found in the conversation that we had, she said we...we're no-nonsense, we pull up, we put and do our work as we need to; pull our socks up.
MS KASINGO	Exactly, I should think the recognition comes...she is one of those people who are during the liberation struggle during the young age and she was pruned and prepared, in particular, the foreign missions she took but in her struggle she also had been for a long time as a minister of Foreign Affairs. Not only her; we have a number of them and there's no doubt that she has got the elements to be one of us; we hope, we hope.
DR. MALKA	I will be watching the polls in November very, very eagerly.
MS KASINGO	In November we still have endorsed...because in terms of our constitution, the president should stand for five years, elected for another five years; ten years finish. As a ruling party we have endorsed the current one because he's only finished his five years, we have endorsed the current one; Dr. Hage Geingob.to be our candidate in the November one; we are talking after five years; it's not far.
DR. MALKA	Then I reserve, for the next 5 years, my comment there.
	AD BREAK
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to Ms Loide Kasingo who is the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia. We're here at the Pan African Parliament and you're listening to 'Womanity – Women in Unity'.
DR. MALKA	Globally, around the world one of the things that I look at from a woman's point of view is that we work so hard but we also do so much of the unpaid labour; we've got to cook, we've got to clean, we've got to take care of the children and that means that there's less time for us to work in the workspace; we've got fewer hours, there's less pay and I wondered from your point of view and perspective; what can we do to help with a more equitable distribution of unpaid labour?
MS KASINGO	I should think as a lawmaker we must, in particular in Africa, we must enact law to recognise the work the women are doing at home, in the

	<p>communities, that's the only way we can contribute to that particular unpaid labour. Women are so strong in terms of carrying, you know, a child for nine months, feeding it for almost seven years and managing the household in Africa, not only your own household, the whole kin family, so in that you could see that women are very strong by nature. I should think if the lawmaker happened to come to assist them to make law which really benefits them in terms of recognising the unpaid labour to make them even how small it is then I should think it will change somehow the equilibrium of unpaid labour and paid labour; unpaid labour which the majority are women, particularly in Africa.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're completely right and I think that is a different way of looking at the problem and I'm always looking for new solutions to issues that we have. The other point; we spoke a little bit about education and I know we were talking about it from a refugee point of view for girl children, we also spoke about it as contributing to women's development. We've now just spoken about the unequal distribution of unpaid labour; what would your advice be to women who find themselves torn between traditional and cultural expectations of them as mothers, as women in society and yet their own personal needs to perhaps advance, to get an education, to start a career?</p>
MS KASINGO	<p>I should think they should have confidence in themselves and here the different political parties, in particular the structure of women has a role to play to form structures, which not necessarily cater for urban, which goes deep into the rural area and you know have a meeting with these people to recognise them. First of all to recognise them of the small labour they have and to give them also literacy classes from there; literacy classes and also those people who are involved in the formal sector to design classes to enable them to finance their small activity step-by-step so that they can build confidence; at the end of the day they will climb the ladder, I should think.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you for that commentary and those aspects; it's very informed.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">AD BREAK</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Today we're talking to Ms Loide Kasingo who is the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia. We're here at the Pan African Parliament and you're listening to 'Womanity-Women in Unity'.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>One of the special things about today being here at the Pan African Parliament is that we are celebrating International Women's Day as the of 8th March and this year's theme is 'Think equal, build smart, innovate for change'. Tell us, what does International Women's Day mean to you?</p>
MS KASINGO	<p>International Women's Day to me it means that we have to recognise the effort made by women, whether in the liberation struggle, during...after independence and also to take into consideration the women who are in the lead; economically, educationally and otherwise, not to forget about women on the grassroots who are either leaders of community activity or who are also leaders of...or who also take part in small economic activities to motivate them, to uplift them. First to recognise the contribution the women have made because like South Africa and Namibia we have a bitter struggle and that struggle both men and women took part in that struggle. I remember our founding president who was Samuel Shafihuma Nujoma who said that when you give a gun to a woman and when the woman is facing the enemy, she never retreat, if that is the case, if we empower women economically, educationally the world will be up because when you feed a woman you feed the whole world.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>That's a powerful statement. Given your learnings, your experiences that you've seen and the move that we're on; our track, how do you think Africa will</p>

	look in 10/20 years time, with respect to gender equality?
MS KASINGO	There should because the African Union has adopted...although it's a bit far, AU Agenda 2063 and the Agenda 2063 to me we should not just wait to be there, we must start now to build step-by-step and we are looking upon our mother body AU with its organ like Pan African Parliament, the Court of Justice, to build in those institutions not to forget women and from there it should flow down to the regional government, with the regional parliament and eventually to the national parliament and it should reach the grassroots women.
DR. MALKA	Now, as we come to the end of the show, one question that I ask all my guests who've made tremendous achievements in their respective fields, because we use this show as a platform for younger ladies to learn from your experience and not have to walk the same journey you took, to make life a little easier; could you tell us, in your opinion what have been some of the key factors to your success?
MS KASINGO	I should think the key success....ah the key factors, some of them I have mentioned to you; I joined the Labour Movement before independence and during that time we have two...we have embarked on two sorts of strategy; to fight for the right of.....as well as to fight the....the right to get independence and I should think first, my mother was very strong. She was she was a teacher and I do recall that she taught us how to work home and also I do remember she told me to say that education is the core Loide; if you want to go up you must trust yourself, you should not trust anybody to do something good for you, not even your brother, not even your husband; trust yourself. I should think...and also I was surrounded by a lot of people who motivated me, but what causes me to be strong is my joining in the labour movement because I found out wherever I go my leadership is being recognised, even here, it's because of that.
DR. MALKA	Thank you for that insight, that's very important, your mom must have been an admiral woman. And lastly, because it's International Women's Day, could you please share a few words of inspiration or motivation for our young ladies that are listening to us?
MS KASINGO	Just to say that young ladies stand up for yourself. Love yourself, what you do. Don't depend on a man to be a successful woman, depend on yourself, depend on your peers and then you'll move forward.
DR. MALKA	Thank you for that message of strength, positivity, confidence and self-sufficiency.
	PROGRAMME END