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GUEST NAME: MS FIONNUALA GILSENAN – AMBASSADOR OF IRELAND TO SOUTH AFRICA, ZIMBABWE, LESOTHO, BOTSWANA AND MAURITIUS

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 is the Ambassador of Ireland to South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, Mauritius and she also has jurisdiction with the responsibility of SADC; Miss Fionnuala Gilsean who took up her portfolio in 2019. Some of her former overseas tours have included posts into Timor-Leste, Ethiopia as well as Tanzania. Welcome Ambassador!
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Thank you very much, I'm delighted to be here!
DR. MALKA	Ambassador to kick-off with, you're no stranger to Africa, you've served as Director of the African Unit for Development Cooperation and Africa Division for Ireland between 2016 to 2019; you were the Ambassador of Ireland in Tanzania and you were Deputy Head of Mission for the Embassy of Ireland in Ethiopia. Please tell us more about some of these experiences.
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Yeah, I mean I've had a...I joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2000 and I kind of...in a way I joined by accident, you know, I was working at the time with an NGO in Ireland and we were very focused on East Timor and it was around the time of the Referendum for Timor East Independence and when the Referendum was won, so to speak, and I thought to myself, you know, now I really want to go and work there and as it turned out, the Irish government announced that they were opening a representative office and I thought to myself, you know, that's my job, it's kind of got my name written all over it, so I ended up, having worked on East Timor for about five years, going to represent the Irish Government there during the transition. So again, there wasn't...I didn't have an intention to stay with the Department, I wasn't looking necessarily for a diplomatic career, I just had a kind of a passion about what was happening in East Timor at the time and I did that and then from there I kind of got drawn into the Department and into the possibilities that diplomacy and International Development Cooperation opened up for somebody who really cared about all the things that you've just spoken about; about human rights, about space for civil society, about human rights defenders, looking at issues around women's empowerment, gender equality; all of these which are really key universal norms and values that we share with many countries around the world, including South Africa. So when I then went back to headquarters after East Timor I was posted to Ethiopia and I had worked in Africa prior to that, in the early 90's when I finished my primary degree I went to Tanzania as a volunteer and I lived in quite a remote place for two years. So it was fantastic to come back after, at that point it was about thirteen or fourteen years when I came back as a diplomat to work in Ethiopia and I really, I just enjoyed that experience a lot, it was very challenging in the sense that, you know, you weren't allowed

	<p>to just have your views, you know, the Ethiopians are very confident and very opinionated; they had a very clear vision of what they wanted for their own country and we were there working with them but they were very clear that that's what we were doing, we were there to work with them and to try and help to resolve some of these big challenges, but with them. So, every single experience that I've had I have to say has been like that, it's been very stretching, it kind of ignites your imaginary creativity as you try to think okay, how can I use the resources, which aren't huge from Ireland, how can I use those resources to really, you know, make a difference in a way that's sustainable and that's what I hope it's going to be like here in South Africa.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Solutions often are most effective when you work in that collaborative partnership, that you're bringing values from both parties to the table.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>Yeah, I mean I think that we underestimate always the degree to which people who are in particular situations, facing particular challenges, have ideas about the way those things can be solved. You know if there is a problem you're better off to go to the almost the lowest level where that problem exists and talk to people because when you're far away from the problem you are least well placed to understand how it might be resolved, and that's not to diminish the importance as well of leadership and the fact that actually creating that broader enabling environment to change things is important and it's part of what government does. But that needs to be symbiotic, you know, there needs to be a clear relationship between the reality on the ground and the kind of broad policies that you can put in place and it also helps you to work out where to deploy resources and make sure that you're targeting them in the right place.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>What would you say were some of the highlights with your Tanzania experience?</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>You see, Tanzania for me is a really special because I lived there when I was 21/22 and you know at that time in your life you just think nothing could go wrong and everything is just a fantastic adventure and I had an unusual experience at that time in the early 90's, you know, I was living in a village, there was no electricity, there was no running water into the house that I was staying in. Everyone in the village thought that it was slightly crazy that this young Mzungu had come to live among them and I was kind of taken into their care because I was on my own and that was the way the community worked. So then to go back almost, well it was twenty years later as Ambassador was a really...I mean it was a huge privilege for me, it also meant that I was able to kind of get my Swahili back up to scratch again and then that made the experience of being ambassador there quite different because I was able to engage in a way that maybe many diplomats wouldn't be able to engage. So yeah, for me Tanzania will always hold a special place in my heart because of that unique connection. So the highlights, I mean again, I mean I think it's the opportunity to work with people in civil society, it's the opportunity to work with people who are, you know, trying to open up a little bit more space for ideas, for dialogue, for engagement, trying to work out ways in which they can engage with government to improve accountability, trying to connect with communities who are on the receiving end of services and government programmes and how can you help those communities to get their voices back up to policy makers and so that we can all hear a little bit better what the real experience of people is. So that was a big highlight and I suppose also just understanding as well, the view of Ireland in Africa, on the continent, a lot of African countries that I've been in, particularly English speaking</p>

	<p>African countries would know a little bit about Irish history, so they would know a little bit about our own struggle for independence from Britain, they would understand how we also had to build our own stage, they would know a little bit about the poverty that was experienced in Ireland, both during the colonial period and then the post-colonial period and then they're also very interested in our economic growth story and transformation. You know one of the things I've been talking to colleagues and friends that I'm meeting is that, you know, South Africa has been free for 25 years and the scale of what happened in terms of you know the ruptures caused by apartheid, the way in which people were so marginalised, so disempowered, so oppressed, it takes a long time to undo that and that's not to say that we should be complacent about the lack of progress but I think we should just recognise that these things are very...structurally very deep, psychologically they're very deep, they're sociologically very deep and I can look back on the Irish experience, we'll celebrate next year 100 years of the independence of the state. Our economic history had a lot of twists and turns and a lot of low periods and in fact we can really say that it wasn't until the 90's that Ireland's economy really took off in a sustainable way. So that was quite a long period between independence and when we began to really say you know what we've...not that we've made it but at least now we feel a bit secure that this is an economy that can accommodate the people on the island, they don't have to emigrate, they don't have to be unemployed, there are educational opportunities and so on.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>And within a country there's so many moving parts that are all interconnected and when you look at sort of the social fabric and the cultural fabric, that that does take a period of maturation and 25 years is relatively young, that there is still a lot to be done and hopefully there'll be further and further progress from an economic perspective to really put the country on track. Coming from an Irish perspective and background as well as the work that you've done in previous countries; have you got any specific development programmes that are targeted at women?</p>
<p>AMBASSADOR GILSENAN</p>	<p>There's a few things that we're really interested in collaborating on in South Africa, I mean I was just telling you before we started recording, I've just come from a women's breakfast, the theme was strongly around Women, Peace and Security, which was organised with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Africa Director Patricia Danzi is in town at the moment and so it was an opportunity to hear from her about how ICRC view the humanitarian situation on the continent and to talk about the role of women and protection issues and gender based violence and so on and there was also Ambassador Joyini from DIRCO was there just talking about South Africa's priority around Women, Peace and Security, particularly at the moment, because as you know South Africa is serving on the Security Council for this year and next. Ireland also has a very long history of peacekeeping, we've had an unbroken record since the late 1950's when we deployed our first peacekeepers to the DRC and we feel with South Africa we can do quite a lot of work on this whole agenda around Women, Peace and Security, both internationally and also domestically. We have our own conflict in Ireland where women have been very involved in conflict resolution and in trying to bring both sides together in Northern Ireland so we don't talk about Women, Peace and Security as something that happens out there and South Africa also doesn't talk about Women, Peace and Security as something that happens out there. So, I think from that point of view we've a real common...we've a common agenda and a little bit of a common history, though different, so</p>

	<p>that's something that I really feel we should work together on. We were just speaking a little bit this morning about, you know, documenting the experiences of women peacekeepers and how, you know, what kind of strategies they used to be effective to reach women and children in acute humanitarian situations, how they can help women in communities that are affected by conflict, take on leadership roles, how they can engage in peace-making possibilities at different levels because sometimes it doesn't have to be some kind of international, you know, peace-making event, it can be actually about how do we resolve things at the community level. So, that's a big thing I think, you know, looking at Women, Peace and Security and looking at the whole gender based violence issue here in South Africa, we're very excited that the President's office has taken such a strong role, there are a lot of possibilities for us to work together around the whole issue of gender based violence. The other thing that we're very excited about, if you don't mind me just continuing, is just working with South Africa around our experience of education and the role that it's played in Ireland's transformation story, you know, I was just thinking as I was coming in here, you know, my parents didn't go to secondary school and it wasn't until the early 1960's that Ireland introduced free secondary school, so a lot of people my generation have parents who didn't....</p>
DR. MALKA	...they didn't have the opportunity...
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>...they didn't have the opportunity, they might have sent one or two, but they wouldn't have sent all of their kids to secondary school and yet almost all of my family have a third level qualification and the next generation I think 100% will have some kind of a third level education. So at the moment we're engaging with the technology universities here in South Africa and our institutes of technology in Ireland, which have been a really key part of helping Ireland to move from what was a very agricultural based economy to a much more sophisticated economy that's very now...it houses some of the very big IT firms, we have a very vibrant medical devices sector, a very vibrant foreign direct investment sector working in areas that are very high tech. Our own agricultural economy has also developed now into a very strong agri-processing economy with a lot of agri-tech, as we call it, or food science capacity within the country. So there's a lot of opportunities I think for us to work on exchanging experience but also on very exciting research partnerships between our institutes of technology and your universities of technology and already there's a number of those partnerships underway on things like water management right through to space science.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And with the nature of that work, with the innovations that come out, the reality is that it's not just going to be isolated to South Africa or Ireland, those are big ticket projects which could impact other aspects around the globe.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>Yeah and I think, you know, because Ireland is a member of the European union (EU) as well, that means that very often when we're engaged in these partnerships, sometimes they're within the broader context of the EU and then South Africa is also engaged in the Africa Union (AU); it's going to take the chairmanship of the AU Commission next year. So, you know, you've to always think there are all these other spaces that we're connected to. The UN is also another very important arena for both South Africa and Ireland; South Africa is on the Security Council as I said this year and next. Ireland is currently campaigning to be on the Security Council from '21 to '22, so we would really like to see a kind of a passing of the baton, if you like, between South Africa and Ireland to pick up the agenda that South Africa has been pioneering over the last number of months and into next</p>

	<p>year. So I think there's so much opportunity and I mean of course you're in the first...I mean I'm in the first eight weeks so I'm full of excitement, but I see so much opportunity, it's really great to be here at this time when you feel that you can make a contribution, that our team and the Embassy can make a contribution.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're going to have a fascinating roadmap ahead of you during this term of office. One aspect which really stood out for me from Ireland was the issue of women leadership; there's very few countries around the world who either have or have had female heads of state and Ireland being one of those exceptions. Mary Robinson became Ireland's first female president who was in office from 1990 to 1997, Mary McAleese succeeded her, serving from 1997 to 2011; do you think that the representation of women in top positions has made politics more attractive for women to enter the public sector?</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>You know in Ireland it's a really mixed picture, I have to be honest with you, I think that both President Robinson and President Mary McAleese were extraordinary role models for women of my generation, you know, Mary Robinson in particular is held in such esteem in Africa by many political leaders that I've met and...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...she's part of the Elder's Group, isn't she....?</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>...and she's part of the Elder's Group, so you know Mary Robinson, I mean to have her as a role model I think both as a national leader and an international leader is really something else and that's also not to take away from Mary McAleese who also made a fantastic contribution. Then when you see how that's translated into our parliamentary system, the story is not as good as it should be and in fact we don't have, I would say, enough women parliamentarians, there are quite a number of places in Africa that would put us to shame in that regard and there are reasons for that, you know, I think the way politics is structured in Ireland, things like, you know, we're still quite a rural society even though maybe we've become much more urban but, you know, in rural areas politics is still very much a man's kind of area, there's a lot of work done at night, in the evenings and women find that very, very difficult because they have a whole set of other responsibilities, which unfortunately, though Ireland has made a lot of strides, they're not relieved of those responsibilities at the household level.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Family duties.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>So family duties are still seen very much as a woman's primary responsibility, even though Irish women work outside the home in very large numbers but they still have all of that duty to do, so our male compatriots have some way to go to step up to take on their share of that burden. So the political parties have actually really recognised this is a problem and recognised that actually it's not going to happen automatically or organically, you have to change the way politics operates, you have to provide childcare facilities for women parliamentarians, you have to have quotas to get women onto parliamentary tickets and men have to recognise that they will in some cases have to step aside because of the way our constituencies are structured, but we have a way to go, we're definitely working on it but I think there should have been more of an impact through Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese's presidency on that, but not as much I think as there should have been. What is, maybe I think sometimes in the diplomatic sphere, Mary Robinson has had a really strong impact in that those of us coming up through the system, we really see her as a role model and I was making some opening remarks at that breakfast this morning and saying you know the importance of women who are in senior positions actually taking part in these kinds of women's breakfast networking events</p>

	and so on, because for younger women, you know, if they don't see it they think they can't be it, it's a kind of an old phrase we, you know...
DR. MALKA	...of course, it's that whole identification and I think people underestimate the power of role modelling and mentorship.
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	And I feel now, I've kind of got to the stage in my career when I really need to be thinking more about that in a more intentional way...
DR. MALKA	...as a give back...?
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...Yes, I' mean I think I've always really enjoyed working with younger women and supporting them and so on but now in particular, I think I need to be quiet intentional about it, stepping up more, taking on more kind of leadership and visibility roles to remind young women that yes, this is exactly where you should be and this is exactly what you can do and don't imagine...don't stand in your own way if it's something that you're passionate and you're interested in. So it's really looking for those opportunities to encourage women to step up and not allow the little voice in their head to say no, no, no, I can't do that or I've too much on or all those things we say to ourselves when we should be stepping up and stepping into particular positions.
DR. MALKA	That's such a refreshing perspective to hear and I often get the sense that women who've come on this show, that we all have this sense of duty to the next generation, that we're giving back from what we received during our formative years or in our professional career and that we really do feel the sense of responsibility and duty to lift up other women that are coming after us. When we were chatting earlier, you were expanding on education as being one of the key elements from an Irish point of view of moving out from its predominantly agricultural focus to become a more sophisticated economy and we always consider that education is an incredibly powerful tool and a mechanism to empower women, not just for themselves, but also for their families and you hold a Bachelor of Social Science as well as a Master of Science from University College of Dublin; can you just share for us how education has played a role in your career development?
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Maybe just to say I think the very first part of that was probably my mother's real hunger around education and real sense that she had missed some very important opportunity by not being able to get a secondary education and that kind of burning desire, if you like, for her children really to be well educated, so I think that was extremely influential, so it never occurred to me that I wouldn't go to university. So, I think that's very important, I didn't have to deal with that confidence issue; will I go, am I able....
DR. MALKA	...it was a given...
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...it was a given and that...when I look back on that it's a little bit surprising, given that, you know, she didn't have a secondary education herself and we could have maybe not felt that confidence.
DR. MALKA	So, it was the way she had cultivated and socialised the family into thinking....
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...yes....
DR. MALKA	...that this is what you're doing anyway...
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...yes....
DR. MALKA	...even though she hadn't walked that path herself...
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...even though she hadn't walked it herself, but I think she had...she felt so keenly the loss of it that she was completely determined that we wouldn't miss that opportunity. Then the other thing, I mean, when I was in university there were lots of really great things but I remember one time

	<p>when I was doing my Bachelor of Social Science, a friend of mine who was a year ahead of me, who was also a young woman, she said oh, you have to come and listen to this lecturer of mine and he was actually an old Dominican Priest and he was teaching Aristotle and Plato, these you know old, old philosophers and I thought oh yeah well I'll just go in to keep her company. Anyway, I was kind of blown away by it because he basically said, you know, I've given you your exam questions for the end of the year, so you can write your exam question as many times as you want and submit it to me until you get the mark that you want, so if you want 100% just keep writing it until you get 100% and he said so if you're here just to get a good mark, that's your way to do that; if you're here to learn, then that's a whole different ballgame. He just stimulated this idea of education as not this banking of knowledge to get a good exam result but actually to really open up your mind, constantly asking the question but why do you think that, what do you think that, so he made you really question many of the kind of received ideas that you'd come to university with. There's a little emoji now where your head blows off the top of your skull, it was a little bit like that being in university at that time with him so and I found then when I went to Tanzania I was again just asking all the time; why are we doing it like this, what do you think about this, you know, and just questioning and asking people and engaging people in a dialogue, which I think to this day is a favourite way of mine of working, you know, and thinking is to actually to talk.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>From having an academic background, I feel that that's almost one of the hungers to know more, to learn more, to expand your mind into new possibilities which you previously had never considered.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	<p>Mmm exactly and that's I think why I love the role of being a diplomat because, you know, I was here about a month when we had a trade mission that arrived and our minister, Heather Humphries, who is the minister for Business Innovation and Enterprise and she brought with her about 20 IT companies and, you know, I've never had much exposure to that whole arena and you know certainly these guys were talking about the kind of technologies that they had, the solutions that they had for telecoms, for services, for agri-tech and every single presentation I was thinking wow, this is so amazing and that was one of the real challenges and privileges of diplomacy is that you're constantly pulled into really different areas; areas that you don't know anything about and I think, you know, as diplomats we have a real duty to put ourselves in situations where we are not so comfortable and have conversations that we aren't experts on, but by doing that we can make links and connections between people and help partnerships grow that will really, as you say, have a ripple beyond the immediate thing that we're doing and have a quite maybe a long-term strategic impact.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>I think that all of these things that you've highlighted that diplomacy has are really intriguing; they're so interconnected and continuously about expansion.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>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 the Ambassador of Ireland to South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, Mauritius, as well as with a responsibility to SADC; Miss Fionnuala Gilsean.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Ambassador, we are coming towards the end segment of the show and one question that I'd like to ask you now is more about more of a personal reflection on your journey and you've shared moments with us from an education perspective, but one of the factors that we'd like to look at is some of the aspects</p>

	that you consider have attributed or contributed to your success. So some people speak about hard work or a particular person in their life; can you share with us what would you say have been some of your key drivers to success?
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Yeah in a sense I...in a way I go back to family and community. I look back on the way I was brought up and even though I can also see some of those intergenerational issues that come out of the poverty of my grandparents and my parents, particularly more maybe my mother than my father, but the kind of capacity to provide that security for your family, that psychological security more than great material wealth, I think that that's a really important thing because that rootedness and solidity is the thing that carries you through very different sets of circumstances and allows you to take the opportunities that come and all of those opportunities are grouped opportunities, it doesn't really matter what age you are, as long as you remain open and curious, you'll continue to grow but that rootedness, that kind of confidence, that security that you know where you came from and you almost like you can go back there if there's a moment of crises...
DR. MALKA	...kind of anchors you....
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...it's an anchor and that for me I always think is something that's really important, that some people have been lucky enough to have and other people have been unlucky and have to struggle more to establish themselves in the absence of that.
DR. MALKA	And who would you say, growing up, have been some of the strong women in your life.
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	I mean the people who kind of pop into your head are, you know, teachers who perhaps didn't really know that they had such an influence. I did...I was on a debating team when I was in school and the woman who managed that debating team was very influential and as a result of that debating team I went off on a trip to Bangladesh for three weeks; me who had never even been on a plane before, and again, there was a woman working for an NGO on that trip who was very influential, particularly as later I came to work with her as a colleague in the Department of Foreign Affairs; she's been very influential on me and remains very influential and then of course, you know, there are people like Mary Robinson, like Graca Machel, you know, there are many people who you come across in your working life who are strong women. I know when I was in Tanzania as well there was also the regional rep from UNHCR at the time, Joyce Mends-Cole, who's now retired but you know she was extremely influential in the way in which she built networks and relationships with people, it was like a master class watching her and what was really good about it was that she wasn't building the network thinking well that will be useful to me later. She just had this incredible interest and warmth in with engaging people and the network was just there whenever she needed to use it and to have that social capital. So those are the people and you have to watch out for them all the time because as well as being a mentor, you never also stop being a mentee, so you have to keep your eye out on who are those guys I should be, you know, listening to and working with who I'm going to learn from and sometimes they can even be younger than you, which is very disconcerting.
DR. MALKA	It sounds like there's been these wonderful moments where you've really been challenged and taken out of your comfort zone and experienced fantastic growth, whether it's debating society going off to Bangladesh or deciding to go off to Tanzania, that have really stretched you into new spaces.
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Yeah and I mean I think you have to remember that not everybody gets those opportunities, so you have to also remain grateful for them.
DR. MALKA	But it sounds like you've created these opportunities, in part.

AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Yes I think of course you create them, maybe when you're younger out of a slight foolhardiness because you don't quite realise all the things that might go wrong, but also it's hard to create them if you don't have the basis for creating them, you know, could I have gone to Tanzania in 1991 if I didn't have my degree.
DR. MALKA	And that's what I mean by making them, because you've done the groundwork on whether it's a degree, whether it's gaining skills in debating, those are all steps that are then been able to allow that opportunity to become an opportunity.
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Yeah and then I think just there's also a passion about, you know, doing certain things and certainly, you know, when I left university the only thing I could really contemplate was the idea of being able to go and work internationally and that's many things, you know, there's also a whole tradition in our society, particularly when I was growing up around the role the missionaries played in Africa, the kind of, you know, in the 1980's when the...again round the anti-apartheid movement in Ireland was very strong, then there were a lot of missionaries working in South Africa at that time and they were working in the townships, they were you know living quite tough lives, there were lots of brushes with the law, but they were there in solidarity with people who were facing the absolute brunt on the frontline of what the apartheid state was doing. So that also, you know, inspired us as kids growing up and of course, you know, we were also steeped in that history of Ireland's own liberation struggle, we were living through the...we call them euphemistically the "Troubles in Northern Ireland", so constantly on the news we were hearing more reports about bombings here or shooting incidents, young people were losing their lives. So you know all of those things also created kind of a sense of justice in you that's quite deeply rooted and then that also creates a passion around well what do you do with that sense of justice, where do you...how do you as...
DR. MALKA	...apply it...
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	...where do you apply it and where do you make your contribution. So there's all those influences, you hardly even know it until somebody asks you the question, you know, why did you do this or what was the opportunity, so that's a little bit maybe the background of why these things were important and what influenced me. So in a sense coming back to South Africa now, you know, in 2019/2020, 25 years after the end of the apartheid era, growing up in the 1980's in Ireland where it was such a big political issue, again it's just a very, you know, there's just a sense of great privilege and if you had said to me, you know, if you had said to my 19 year-old self, when you're an ambassador in South Africa, it's like what? So you know you don't know where your life is going to go, but what you can do is follow your passions for things, not everybody though, I do think we also need to realise that circumstances prevent people from following their passions and that leads to extraordinary levels of frustration. But for me, I was able to do that and am able to do that so I am very privileged.
DR. MALKA	Thank you so much for sharing your story and some of the lessons that you've learned. Lastly, as we close out the conversation today, could you share a few words of inspiration or wisdom that you'd like to pass onto women that are listening to us?
AMBASSADOR GILSENAN	Well I suppose what I would say is don't underestimate your own leadership potential and don't sit back if there's an opportunity to actually get involved and in particular don't stand in your own way. It's one thing if you're prevented from doing it because of the way the communities are organised, because of the way the power of relationships are in the community, because maybe of the threat of violence or some other obstacle,

	<p>but don't let you be the obstacle and I think sometimes as women, you know, we absorb so much about the fact that we can't do things, we shouldn't do things or it isn't our place. So it's very, very important to really think to yourself when you're saying oh, I know I can't do that, just to check am I saying that because I really can't do it or there's some genuine obstacle, or am I actually standing in my own way, so ask yourself that question, if you're standing in your own way get right out and move forward. That would be my piece of advice.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Fantastic, no room for self-doubt and don't rest on your laurels, jump for those opportunities.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENEN	<p>Exactly.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you so much for joining us today.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENEN	<p>It was a real pleasure and thank you so much for inviting me so early on in my tenure, so I hope that there will be another opportunity to have discussion maybe at the end and we can look back and see well, did you do all you hoped and did it live up to expectations.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>It would be great to look at milestones as you progress through your tenure in South Africa and the rest of the countries that you're looking after.</p>
AMBASSADOR GILSENEN	<p>Yes, well thank you very much for the opportunity.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>PROGRAMME END</p>