

**PROGRAM DATE: 2020-11-05**

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

**GUEST NAME: MS NOMCEBO ZIKODE – SOUTH AFRICAN SIGNER AND SONGWRITER**

<b>SPEAKER</b>	<b>TRANSCRIPTION</b>
DR. MALKA	Hello, I'm Dr. Amaleya Goneos-Malka, welcome to 'Womanity– Women in Unity'. The show that celebrates prominent and ordinary African Women's milestone achievements in their struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence.
DR. MALKA	Joining us on the line today from KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, is singer and songwriter Nomcebo Zikode, who is the songstress and voice behind the massive global hit Jerusalema, which has sparked the worldwide dance challenge Jerusalema Challenge. Welcome to the show!
MS ZIKODE	<b>Thank you so much for having, hello to the listeners and hello to you, I hope you're good!</b>
DR. MALKA	We're absolutely fantastic and we look forward to hearing more about the work that you do and the future that lies ahead of you.
MS ZIKODE	<b>Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm also looking forward to talk to you.</b>
DR. MALKA	Much of this year, 2020, has been haunted by the Covid-19 pandemic, but Jerusalema seems to have been an incredible source of upliftment with the Jerusalema Challenge being taken up from all corners of the globe, whether it's schools, corporates... I even saw a video of Monks yesterday and I believe there are now two hundred and one million views on YouTube. So, to begin with, please tell us how Jerusalema came about?
MS ZIKODE	<b>Honestly what happened is that before I met up with Master KG, I did a song with one of the DJs here in South Africa, the song became very big in South Africa and also Botswana, Zimbabwe, the song was called "Emazulwini". So Master KG saw that song or heard that song and then she called me, she was like my sister, I love your voice, the way you attack the song it's got soul, I would love to work with you and your song one day and then he called me again, he was like you need to come to studio now. I was like oh my gosh, now, and he was like yes, I insist, you must come now, let's do a song I believe you can do wonders on the beat and then I went to studio and when I got there it was already late, I was not too sure if I will be able to write a song there and there, I remember asking Master KG to give me the beat and then I will write the song at home, but he was like no man, aren't you the one who wrote that big song "Emazulwini", why now it's like maybe you are afraid to write a song in studio. I was no man, not that I'm afraid, it's already late but if you insist, I will try and write it here in studio, but then maybe give me some few seconds, maybe you can go out from the studio, leave the beat for me playing, like keep on playing it for me. The beat kept on playing on my ears, I heard myself, I think maybe it played about two to three times, I heard my myself coming out with the lyrics saying ..., I was like Master KG come back to the studio and I said we've got something here, there is something, come back, where are the [cams], put the [cams] so that we can record. We recorded there and then because I was even afraid that maybe I will forget the lyrics, because you know sometimes as a songwriter something will come up, maybe you are in Woolworths, you are inside the store, you are even afraid to sing, people would be like hey this one is crazy, so now sometimes I take my phone, I go on the side to sing a little bit. So then I sang the song there and there,</b>

	<p>Master KG loved it, I went home, I remember it was around, I got home around one am, I remember the following day that's when I got a chance to listen to what I was doing.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So in not even 24 hours you had come up with the lyrics and you'd recorded the track?</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>Yes, yes, yes, it's actually, you know, some people will ask me if maybe Nomcebo you did it deliberate that you wanted to write a song about Jerusalema. No, no, no, not at all, honestly I didn't know what to write about, whether I will write about love or I will write about God or whatsoever, but the words came out for me naturally, like automatically, even myself it took time for me to understand why I wrote this song. I had to think and listen to the lyrics, so it's when I understood that you know what, now I understand why Nomcebo you wrote a song like this, it's because of what was happening in you, you know, the way I wrote it I was, how can I put it, like I was taking everything that was inside me, you know, because I was not in a good place that time, so I was asking God to take me in a beautiful place, to take me in a happy place because I was not happy at all. You know sometimes you get a sleepless nights just because your things are not going well, so on that song I was singing to God, take me to a holy place, my place is not here, is not here [lyrics in Zulu]. So because I've been wanting to sing all my life and I've been asking God, you gave me this voice not to sing alone in the bathroom, but you gave me this voice to send a message to people, you gave me this voice to sing to people, but now I've got this beautiful voice but I'm sleeping at home, I wake up, I sleep, I wake up, I sleep, can you please help to make this voice to be heard, not all over the world but in South Africa, because trust me, that time I was only training for my voice to be heard in South Africa. I didn't know that God will even make it like heard all over the world, not only in South Africa, it came out as a surprise to me, hence sometimes I would be like so God, you heard me in a way that you were like you know what Nomcebo, I will do wonders for you, your voice will be heard not only in South Africa, but it will be heard all over the world, you know, so I'm so happy, trust me, I didn't know that I can have a song that can be heard, like my voice can be heard in America, in Nigeria, in London, all these places. I know that there are so many artists in South Africa who will want to have a song as big as Jerusalema.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thinking about the phenomenon of Jerusalema, of being able to touch so many people around the world with your voice, with your words, your lyrics...</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>...yes....</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>..it's an incredibly influential place to be and at the same time there's also a responsibility that comes to your fan base and the people that are listening to you and engaging with you; how do you address that?</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>You know with me I'm so lucky that I'm not that person who's always outside or maybe who likes to brag and all of that, I'm always in my space, not unless maybe I'm going to work, but yes, I do meet up with people maybe when I'm going to the shops and all of that, they are so happy to see me, they take pictures and all of that and I enjoy it, I'm loving it because what I want is to have my music all over, but I know that having my music being heard all over, like yes of course it will bring people on my space. Honestly I am enjoying it because these are the people that are supporting me, I love them so much, so seeing them loving me so much, I also enjoy it and I'm so happy that it's no longer about the song Jerusalema but also about me and also about everything that I'm doing going forward. I've been in Congo five days back or four days back, trust me, people were singing my other songs on the album the "Xola Moya Wam" I even posted</p>

	<p>it on social media, if you can check on my Instagram. There in Congo they were singing “Xola Moya Wami” together with me, so that alone it made me happy that I also I get videos seeing even white people singing to one of the songs on my album, so that alone, it makes me feel that oh so now Nomcebo you are an international people. So things like this can happen to anyone because you know sometimes we see beautiful things happen to certain people, we think maybe God maybe chooses certain people, this will never happen to me, just because maybe I’m from a poor family, maybe this happens to people who are from rich families, you know, all of those things. So looking at that for me, because I’m from a small township in KwaZulu-Natal, Hammarsdale and my father passed away in 1985 when I was born, so my mom, it wasn’t easy for her to raise us. So I never thought something like this will ever happen to me and I know even with people in my surroundings, they’ve never thought something like this will happen to me because you know, as people, we’ve got that tendency of judging each other. We see this one maybe has got excellent English and then this one maybe she speaks with broken English, we are judging that this one will never go anywhere, this one didn’t go to beautiful schools, then her future is no way. So thank God doing this to me, honestly this is also to say to all the kids that did not grow up in a fancy way or maybe didn’t go to good schools because of the background, this is to say to them, anything is possible and I’m talking to you now, I am now an ambassador to the world for arts and culture. I’ve never thought that can happen to me, you know, so I would love to really to say to the young ones, either you are a girl or a boy, anything is possible. Drugs are not the way, there are so many things that I can’t even mention here that are not the way, especially for the young girls that you need to stand for yourself, you can’t have that thing all the time of saying I can’t do anything for myself, I need a man or I need someone to make my things possible. As women, as young women, we can make so many things possible and now there’s also social media, say for instance you want to be a singer but you don’t know how to sing right, you want to improve your singing, maybe you want to go to school and you don’t have money to go to school, you can go to Google and check, check lessons from Google. I know it’s not easy but you can try to upgrade yourself by doing that, trust me, one day you will be something instead of maybe choosing drugs or choosing other things that will never take you anywhere in life.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>There are so many possibilities that people become and so many tools with access to information, that people can educate themselves and better themselves. Thinking back, have you always wanted to be in the entertainment industry, in the music industry?</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>Yoh, you know what, I believe that if people saw me that time when I was young they would have saw another Nomcebo. I was that child, that child who was very active, I knew there and there that I wanted to be on TV, I used to tell my mom, that mom I want to be on TV and my mom will ask me what is that you want to do on TV, I will be like mom I want to sing, I want to act, I want to see me on TV, I want to do adverts, all of these things, you know. I was that type whereby if there is a party somewhere, they will call me, they will be like my neighbours, haai this party can’t finish without Nomcebo, let’s call Nomcebo. I will go there, I will dance like nobody’s business and trust me that time, then I was eight, nine, ten, you know that age, but I was already that child who is that active, you know, but then I’m not saying maybe God is wrong by giving me opportunity now, maybe he knew that if I got the opportunity that time then I was going to take drugs or maybe I was going to be wild and all of that, he wanted to use me now</p>

	<p>that I'm matured, like I know what's right, I know what's wrong. Not to say though I'm perfect in this life, but I'm better maybe compared to before, you know when you get fame when you're still young, it's easy for you maybe to be corrupted, you know. I remember even at school, my teachers used to ask me what do you want to be when you grow up, what is it that you want to study and I'll be saying I want to study music and my class would be like no, no, no, they will laugh at me, they will say hey who are you, you can't study music, you know, but it's only now when I'm in Johannesburg I got to understand that you know what, I don't know why they were laughing at me because actually you can actually study music. So, it's because you know when you are from a rural area, those kids they didn't know anything, even myself, I didn't know much, you know.</p>
DR. MALKA	So you've always had this passion for entertainment, for performing.
MS ZIKODE	Yes, yes.
DR. MALKA	In the music industry there have been big shifts, I know that in the past a lot of event gigs were very biased towards male artists and there was less opportunities for female artists; how do you see shifts happening in the music industry for more female artists to have access to equal opportunities?
MS ZIKODE	<p><b>Yoh honestly speaking it's still not easy for female artists, I remember there was journalist also who asked me this question, like she mentioned something like Nomcebo we see...we see you're doing wonders with Jerusalema, like we can be able to recognise you, of which with other artists you will find that the DJ's will go with a song and the person who sang the song you won't see her or you know, but with me it happens that we are together, you can see Master KG but at the same time even if maybe you can't see me a hundred percent, but people will get to see me, you know, so I don't know how I did it, I honestly wouldn't say that it's all because of me working hard, no, I believe it's God, but I know that for so many female artists it's not easy for them, it's not easy honestly, but we need to try by all means as females to stand up, to raise our heads up, you know, so that we can also be there, you know, to be recognised. Imagine, most people even with Jerusalema they didn't know that it's actually me who's singing Jerusalema, they were thinking that it's a guy, you know, but I don't know maybe it's because Jerusalema is big, most of them they ended up seeing that no, it's actually the lady who's singing Jersusalema. So I don't know what can I say Ma'am, maybe it's for us as women to try by all means to show our faces, as difficult as it is, I don't know.</b></p>
DR. MALKA	So part of it is about improving the visibility, so when there are videos we're seeing women, we're hearing more women's voices. Is there anything that the public can do to try and put pressure on the industry so that women get more exposure and are not exploited because that's another thing that happens, that when a person does get a gig as a woman, that sometimes she's paid less than men.
MS ZIKODE	<p><b>Yes, yes, I don't know, you know, it's a pity because I don't have powers to change whatever that it's been there for years and years, you know. I don't know how we can change whatever that's there already, hence I'm saying as women we need to unite, we need to start loving each other, because sometimes you find that even other women if you're doing something nice they will try by all means to check their mistakes instead of checking what you are doing good, you know. Some of them they will be like yes Nomcebo can sing but she can't dance, you know, all of those things. So I think it should also start with us as women, to support each other, to love each other, you know, it's very important that we as women, we should start loving each other, start supporting each other and trust me by doing that</b></p>

	<b>we will go far and by doing that we will suppress that spirit of others that are trying to bury us as women. If maybe guys are trying to bury us as women, we will be able to suppress that by uniting as women.</b>
DR. MALKA	That unity aspect is very, very important.
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to South African singer and songwriter Nomcebo Zikode, who is the songstress and voice behind the massive global hit "Jerusalema". 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. We would love to hear your comments on Twitter:@WomanityTalk
DR. MALKA	Nomcebo, earlier you mentioned that you were in Congo, you were performing; have you had a chance to collaborate with any other artists in the continent?
MS ZIKODE	<b>Not yet but I would love to, you know, there are so many people that I am loving that side, I love [Kaginini], oh I love [Asa] so much, I love [Asa] so so so much, with all my heart. So I would love to do collabo's of course, but so far I was also concentrating on my album because it's still a baby, it's just maybe two months old now, so it's very important for me to build my name because you know some people they will be like Jerusalema, it's Master KG, they won't mention me, so it's very important for me to create Nomcebo, you know, then the collabo's will come after.</b>
DR. MALKA	And on that point Nomcebo, tell us about the new album, what's it about, what inspired you, what do you want to achieve with it?
MS ZIKODE	<b>You know what I wanted to achieve about this album is to get all the taxis playing my songs on the album, get to see the album on social media, people dancing to the songs and this is exactly what is happening now, people are checking me dancing to the songs, I hear taxi's passing by, I see even private cars playing my songs, so honestly I have achieved what I wanted with the album, but not to say it's enough. I would also appreciate if I can also hear people dancing to it more and more and more and also the album getting more streams, you know, people downloading it more and more and more, I'd really appreciate that. This album, I didn't sit down and think Nomcebo this time you write about this, no, I just wrote what was inside me, like the songs like [language] there I was talking to God, asking for forgiveness because of the pandemic Covid-19. So right when the president was announcing that we're going for lockdown, I was praying, asking God, you allowed the lockdown, I've got a big song in the country now, Jerusalema, so you just allowed lockdown, how am I going to make money because this is a big song, I'm supposed to be going out all over the world making money through performances, now you're deciding to allow the lockdown, to allow this pandemic, the Covid-19, this illness and then I remember I prayed to God, I was like God please, if ever you are giving this sickness, Covid-19, so that we can remember, maybe this is the way of wanting us to remember that you are there, you are God, maybe we are not respecting you enough, so you want to show us that at any time you can close the country, you know, actually not the country, but the world, you know. So with this song I was saying forgive us if ever it's all because of our sins, so the songs are talking about those things, like there's also another song where I am saying [xxx] either on social media or my pictures, but sometimes it's not like that. When I'm sleeping I've got worries, you know, I'm also human, I do have worries, because you know with people, they think if you are a Beyonce, you're a celebrity, you don't have worries, your life is perfect, so I was trying to share that with people that as much as you are a celebrity or you are a king, you do have problems, like you can look beautiful in their eyes or you can have all the money, but you do face</b>

	<b>up with the challenges in life. So my songs are all about life, my life actually.</b>
DR. MALKA	I was just going to say that and not just your life, the things that everybody is going through, we all have...
MS ZIKODE	<b>...through, yes...</b>
DR. MALKA	...these concerns...
MS ZIKODE	<b>...yes, yes, yes.</b>
DR. MALKA	Can you sing a few bars or a few words from one of your favourite songs on the new album?
MS ZIKODE	<b>Oh my God! [singing beautiful voice].</b>
DR. MALKA	You voice is so, so beautiful, really!
MS ZIKODE	<b>Thank you so much, thank you, thank you so much and you know it took me a while, it took me so many....it took me so many years. I had tears on the way, but now look at me, people are saying good things to me, they're saying you've got a beautiful voice and all of that, so really in life nothing comes easy, we just need to be patient with ourselves.</b>
DR. MALKA	Nomcebo, one of the questions that I ask all my guests on this show who've made tremendous achievements in their respective fields, whether it is in the music industry, whether it is in politics or academics or sport is about the factors that they consider have contributed to their success. Some people speak about hard work; others talk about perseverance; in your opinion what have been some of the key drivers for your success?
MS ZIKODE	<b>Yes, all of that, perseverance, it's one of the major keys, like you know to love your craft, you know, it's very important because if you don't love your craft you won't have...you won't be able to stay for ten years or maybe five years, instead you will do it and then after five years you will see that there's nothing happening here and you try something else. After that you see that ah this one is not happening you try something else, but if you've got love at what you are doing, trust me, you will have the patience, you know, you won't just leave it just like that. So for me I think to have love with what you are doing, when you love something you will of course be patient with yourself.</b>
DR. MALKA	It does take a strong person, because as you said, you're 35 and now you're having your moment, a lot of people would have given up.
MS ZIKODE	<b>Yes, yes, you need to be very very strong, you need to be very strong honestly, if you are weak, you won't make it, honestly, you won't make it if you are weak, you need to be very very very strong. This industry needs someone who is very strong; if you're not strong enough you will never make it.</b>
DR. MALKA	And please tell us, when you were growing up, what were some of the important moments in your life that have made you to become the person you are today?
MS ZIKODE	<b>Oh my gosh, how can I answer that one [laughs]? I think the way I grew up, it was not easy, it has taught me life that there is nothing I will take for granted, you know, anything for me is very important because I will always feel like Nomcebo the way you grew up it was not easy, so you need to fight for yourself to be on top, no-one else will put you on top but you. So, I sometimes believe that God made it in purpose for me to grow up, because you know I'm one of those kids who were travelling long distances to go to work...to go to school, I'm sorry, you know, sometimes you go to school there's no food, you know, you come back you think maybe there will be food at home now that you didn't have money, you didn't have money to carry, you think that there will be food and still there would be no food at home, you know. So I think those things, they made me to be a strong woman, it's not easy to break me, you know, I'm very strong, because there</b>

	<p>are some people that I was doing backings way back with a long time ago, they gave up so easily, when it was tough, you know and they were not tired, but they were like ah me, I can't do this, but with me I was able to, how can I put it, like I was able to stand by myself with whatever challenge that was happening, even though it wasn't easy, I would cry at night, but in the morning I am going to work, you know. With other people, they will cry and instead of maybe coming back to work they will give up, you know, so I believe that for me growing up in that hard way, it has made me to be a strong woman that I am today.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're reminding me of a quote that I once read by Winston Churchill, it's very simple, all he said "Never, never, never give up" and for people to succeed and listening to everything that you've said, that's exactly how we should be living is don't give up.</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>And you know the way Johannesburg is very tough. It's very easy for you to end up maybe selling your body or maybe end up having a grandpa who is taking care of you just because you need money, not because you love him, you know, so I was very young when I came to Johannesburg, but I was able to stand firm and say Nomcebo you won't do this, this you will do, this you won't do, you know, because when you are still young people can influence you so easily, you know, they will influence you with alcohol and say haai just drink, there's nothing wrong, you know, you drink, now it's okay but after some time you end up drinking in a way that it's no longer okay for you, you need a rehab, you know. So for me, hence I am saying, the way I grew up it has made me to be a strong woman, I told myself that this is a no, I can't do this, this I can't do, this I can't do, I know where I come from, I can't do this to my mom, I need to be an example, I need to fight for my life. So honestly, I don't know, maybe I need a place where I can tell so many women to never, I don't want to say it's an excuse because I know life is tough, sometimes you can end up selling your body, you can end up doing whatever just because it's hard, but I want to say to them they need to be more stronger. They can make it. I made it myself, they can also make it, hence I said earlier on to you that I used to not to carry anything at school, I come back to school, I would cry, like when I tell people at home there's no food, you know, but still I managed not to end up having maybe older guys to take care of my life or maybe selling my body and all of that, but I fought and it wasn't easy, trust me, life is hard, even now I'm not saying even those who are selling their bodies, I am not judging them, but I am saying to those who haven't started doing it, there is other ways of building their future, of making it better, you know, instead of choosing that for them. There are other ways, as hard as it can be, it can take ten years, twenty years, but I want them to be strong, you know.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You've certainly demonstrated one as being a strong, independent woman and a person who has established your own values and principles that you don't compromise on. Lastly, as we close out the conversation today, can you share a few words of inspiration that you'd like to pass onto young girls and women in Africa that are listening to the show?</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>Yes. I would love to say to everyone who will be listening to this show, I'm sorry that I won't concentrate more on girls, please allow me to also touch on the guys as well because it is so saddening seeing our young guys as well, taking drugs, standing all over the streets like maybe washing our windows so that they can have that small money to buy drugs. So I would love to say to the youth, please, please, I beg you, try by all means to love yourself, because this should start by loving yourself. Young women, love yourself. If you love yourself you'd look up to people who are doing it in life, you</p>

	<p>look up to Beyonce and you'd be like one day I want to be like Beyonce and if you want to be like Beyonce, you will make sure that you love yourself, you don't get pregnant at a young age, you make sure that you don't put your life in alcohol, you know, in drugs, you know. So to all the young ones, please love yourself and there's nothing that comes easy in life, life is tough actually to all of us, not to you only, because some of them they will be like ah you celebrities, you don't know life is tough for us. To all of us life is tough, but we did is to choose what to do and not to do, we loved ourselves; we chose good things for us. So please young ones, love yourself, make sure that you choose good friends, because sometimes choosing bad friends will kill your destiny, will kill your life, you'll kill your career, you know, so yes I will just say to them love yourself and never give up in whatever that you want to achieve. Goals they are achievable, what you need to do is to make sure that you keep on dreaming, but not only dreaming, put action on that dream, never, ever say it in your mouth that I want this but you never put an act on it, put an action on whatever that you want to do or in whatever that you want to achieve in life.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you for sharing those great words of advice of loving yourself, of being responsible for the choices you make and not just talking about becoming something, but really exercising your actions and as we end the show, please can you take us out with Jerusalema?</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>[laughs and sings]. I love you guys.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you, thank you for joining us it's been...</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>...you're welcome...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...a pleasure having you on the show and we wish you all the very very best for your future, may it be big, bright and beautiful.</p>
MS ZIKODE	<p>Thank you, thank you so much, may God bless you too and all the listeners.</p>
	<p><b>PROGRAMME END</b></p>