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

**GUEST NAME: MS PATRICIA SCOTLAND – SECRETARY GENERAL – COMMON WEALTH OF NATIONS (PART 1)**

<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 is the Commonwealth Secretary General, Patricia Scotland, who is the sixth Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations and, incidentally, the first woman to hold this post. She was elected at the 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2016, is a barrister by profession, she was elevated to the House of Lords in 1997 and as a British Labour Party politician, served in ministerial positions within the United Kingdom's government, most notably as the Attorney General for England and Wales and Advocate General for Northern Ireland. Welcome to the show Commonwealth Secretary General!
<b>SECRETARY GENERAL</b>	<b>Thank you very much for having me, it's a real thrill, as you outlined the nature of this programme I felt as if you were talking about my whole life because it is the interest that I have had for so many years.</b>
DR. MALKA	Well we're so glad you can join us and exactly that, in terms of your profile, of being able to echo that and dispense it to many more women who are listening to us across the globe. To start with, looking at your current portfolio, the Commonwealth consists of fifty-four member states, which is in effect the equivalent number of countries making up Africa; can you tell us more about the relevance of the Commonwealth today?
<b>SECRETARY GENERAL</b>	<b>Well the Commonwealth really represents about one third of the world, it's 2.4 billion people, 60% of whom are under the age of thirty, so it's a young Commonwealth and the youngest of all is, of course, Uganda, where 89% of Ugandans are under the age of thirty. So it's an incredibly dynamic, useful constellation of countries, but we're bound together, not by treaty, but by values and by principles and the Commonwealth has grown from the original eight members in 1949 to the fifty-four members that we now have and the powerful platform that this creates is really an opportunity to bring all the talents of these fifty-four countries who come from five different regions, nineteen of them are from Africa and if you look at the Mo Ibrahim Index, those African countries who are part of our Commonwealth family are right at the top of the democracy index or in the middle, we've got no country near the bottom and that family commitment to each other has been very strong. But one of the very important things about our Commonwealth is we represent the small, the vulnerable and the developing, because thirty-two of our member states are small states and every single state in our Commonwealth is equal to the other, no-one is greater than the other and we do everything by consensus and it's really been a powerful instrument for change, because you will remember that it was the Commonwealth which led the fight against apartheid in South Africa and it was the Commonwealth who was the first one to say because we are all equal we won't tolerate difference being made between our citizens on the grounds of race, religion or any other matter and I think it's one of the proudest things that the Commonwealth did and we were so</b>

	<p>thrilled that when Nelson Mandela first came to the UK Madiba went straight to the Commonwealth Secretariat, because the Commonwealth had led that charge. And so I think values is what I would say of the Commonwealth, is as relevant today as it was then when we look at the issues we're dealing with, which are things like race, we're still dealing with race; The Black Lives Matters issues, we're still dealing with issues of climate change and in 1989 it was the Commonwealth who said 'climate change presents an existential threat' and we've been on that ever since and the economic pressure for equality and right now with Covid-19, again it's the Commonwealth Member States coming together to create the Covid-19 Resource Centre, sharing everything we have as a family, to try and preserve our humanity. So it's an extraordinary group of nations bound by, I suppose people don't often like this word, but it's bound by love and values.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And with those values it sounds as though there is equality entrenched, there is care, there's togetherness and unity which are driving the positive effects of the organisation.</p>
SECRETARY GENERAL	<p>Yeah, no it's absolutely true because I remember when I became Secretary General, I looked at so what is it about the Commonwealth and I thought the Commonwealth has to be built on all our talents, because if you think about it we're like a petri dish we have big ones, small ones, rich ones, poor ones, squeezed middle. We've got every race, every creed, every religion and when those countries come together and they sit round the same table as equals and they listen to each other eye-to-eye, you have an opportunity to create something which is not easy to create anywhere else, because we all speak the same language, we all have a similar parliamentary system, we all have similar laws and we all signed up to the same values. If you look at the Commonwealth Charter, which the Commonwealth committed itself to in 2012, this I think was a real precursor to the Sustainable Development Goals, if you look at that charter one to sixteen; they are one to sixteen of the Sustainable Development goals which was agreed to by the whole world in 2015, three years later and when you look at SDG 17, which is partnership which binds everything together, partnership is in the preamble of our charter because this is how we do things and that charter took two years, three months and eleven days, if you like, to agree, because everybody had to agree and the question was; what binds us together, what do we believe in, what do we deliver and I was very proud when I looked at what happened in 2015, that the Commonwealth having agreed on the charter, the world eventually agreed on the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. The Commonwealth in November 2015 agreed when it came to climate change, we had to have a commitment at two degrees of 1.5 aspirational target and it had to be enforceable and that was in November in Malta. What did we as a world community agree in Paris in December, you know, just weeks later? We agreed enforceability, two degrees and a 1.5 aspirational target, so I think that sort of demonstrates that if we listen to each other, if we respect each other, if we hone in what joins us, as opposed to what separates us, we can actually do some really wonderful things.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>...yes...</p>
SECRETARY GENERAL	<p>So that's why I am proud of the Commonwealth, because of their ability to listen to each other, to care about each other and to do that which joins as opposed to that which separates/</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Those are all positive, good values, which in reality, if every nation subscribed to them I think the world would be in a better place.</p>

	<b>AD BREAK</b>
DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to the Commonwealth Secretary General Patricia Scotland. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter: @WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	Thinking about this element of time; it takes a long time to do things, to be able to put policies in place, to formulate guidelines, but where we are today, Covid-19 has just had a devastating impact the world over and that happened in, time wise it was just at a scale and rate second-to-none; what role are you seeing the Commonwealth play in trying to co-ordinate and support countries dealing with the outbreak and moving ahead?
<b>SECRETARY GENERAL</b>	<p>Well what happened, and I'm really proud of this, because what happened is as soon as the Covid-19 pandemic started, the immediate response from the Commonwealth, all of us, was so what do we do now, how can we help, what have we got and the Commonwealth isn't just about the country, the Commonwealth is about the non-governmental organisations who are part of the Commonwealth family, about eighty-nine of them. So we've got the Commonwealth pharmacists, the Commonwealth doctors, the Commonwealth nurses and all of us came together to say what do we have, what can we share and what can we do. Now we'd gone through a really dramatic reform programme the three years before, so we created a virtual platform, which when Covid struck, we went seamlessly from a face-to-face to a virtual platform and immediately we created the Covid-19 Resource Centre, which went onto our Innovation Hub, the three major things that came of 2018 was the Commonwealth Blue Charter, the Commonwealth Innovation Hub, which brought all the innovation across the Commonwealth, trying to put it in one space, and that creation of the opportunity to share knowledge, to share expertise, enabled us to do some fantastic stuff. So for example, as you know, the World Health Organisation has a World Health Assembly in March, so at that time we brought all the fifty-four health ministers of the Commonwealth together, virtually, it was the first virtual Commonwealth Minister's Meeting ever, but we just did it because we knew one, that our health ministers were committed to each other, two, that in 2019 they had already said we need to prepare just in case there was going to be a pandemic. Now we never believed that the pandemic would be by the end of the year, but we were looking forward, we were looking at things like Ebola and SARS and we had posted the question; what are we going to do if the next thing that happens is a pandemic and what if that pandemic happens in the next five years and so we had started to think about the platforms and this is what I have found so inspirational, because whereas everybody else was running away from each other and so many people were unfortunately thinking me, myself and I, what the Commonwealth did is to say what about what we can do together, how can we help each other and it was amazing, there was no country that I reached out to and I said as Secretary General will you help us, will you give us your knowledge, will you share with us what you are doing; all of them said yes because this wicked, wicked virus has put its tentacles into every single home, you know, the fear that it generated; our loved ones are absolutely affected, not by what we are doing, but what everybody else did and what realised that in order for my loved ones to be safe I have to make sure your loved ones are safe. So, this idea that we're separate was out of the window, the whole of humankind is being affected by this and the only way we can defeat it is by coming together and we learned, if we had every forgotten it, that we're inter-dependant and what we have to do is to fight together to make each other safe and that's an extraordinarily painful thing, I think, for all of us to go</p>

	<p>through and to be going through. But you know, two things have happened; it has shown us the very, very best of humanity and it's also frightened us to see some of the worst, but what most of us know now is we have no choice, this idea that we can go it alone and do it on our own is just nonsense. We have to go together, we have to support each other, we have to care for each other and we have to work together and that's why I think the Commonwealth has really come into its own during this period, because that is our modus operandi, that's how we have always worked in partnership, so this need has been really important, but the need to have women fully participating, I think has never been clearer. We need women in leadership, we need women deliverers, we need women's voices, we need women's intellectual capacity and it's been quite interesting, if you look at some of the clinicians who have been working on these, on solutions, the vaccines, a number of the greatest working now are women clinicians, so it's going to take all of us. I remember my mother once saying to me, you know, because I am one of twelve children, I have seven brothers...</p>
DR. MALKA	...wow...!
SECRETARY GENERAL	<p>...I am the tenth of my parent's twelve children, I have seven brothers and there are five girls, I'm one of the five and I'm the tenth and I remember and my father was the greatest feminist that I think I ever met and he was probably made so by my mother, but I remember my mother saying to me, you know, shaking her head and saying, "You know I don't understand, we don't let men do anything else on their own, why do we let them run the world, they need our help", and I think the idea that it takes men and women working together equally to get the best solutions is something I think I've had drummed into my head my whole life.</p>
<b>AD BREAK</b>	
DR. MALKA	<p>Today we're talking to the Commonwealth Secretary General, Patricia Scotland. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter: @WomanityTalk.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You've raised several points here, the first one that I want to touch on though is with regards to getting more women into leadership roles and the types of programmes that the Commonwealth is running to perhaps encourage that, I mean you being in this position is effectively you're a role model and women can see, they can aspire to walk into your shoes, but what types of programmes do you have in the Commonwealth to encourage that uptake?</p>
SECRETARY GENERAL	<p>Well we have put the issue of women and women's empowerment through every single facet, it's not as if this is an add-on, this is an integral part of what we've been doing and what's been great is to use the leadership that has been imbedded by the Commonwealth women leaders and so we have the Commonwealth Ministerial...Women's Ministerial Meeting, who have met during this period, at the moment it's chaired by Kenya, Professor Margaret Kobia, the minister in the cabinet office responsible for administration who has been leading this and what she said quite clearly is look, during this period of Covid we have had the risk that all the great things that we have made step forward will go back and we cannot let that happen. So we've been looking at things, for instance like domestic violence, you'll know that domestic violence affects one in three women in the world, it's the greatest cause of morbidity in women and girls, it causes huge economic cost and we have created a model which will evaluate the cost of domestic violence to enable member states to see the reality and the cost of not addressing these issues. We've been doing women in leadership programmes, looking at women's economic empowerment and the ending of violence against women has been critical, so we launched The Commonwealth Says No More Campaign, which tackles domestic violence,</p>

	<p>but we know that over the years we have had so many things that have not worked to address this issue, but we've also had brilliant things which do work. So this campaign brings together all the knowledge, all the expertise, all the toolkits as an open source opportunity, an open source platform, to say let's share what we know and let's get this right. So for example if I can give you an example of the economic cost of violence, we did some pioneering research, we helped Seychelles to evaluate what was the cost, the economic cost of violence against women and girls in Seychelles and having done that research, they found that Seychelles loses over 65 million US Dollars each year to violence against women and girls and so the programmes, which we can cut it, because if you cut that violence, you actually create an opportunity to do great things and we're also looking at programmes to boost women's participation in politics. For instance training women in campaigning skills before the 2019 in elections in Malawi, where the number of parliamentary seats held by women increased from 16% to 23%. There are so many other programmes, but what we concentrate on is implementable steps that can be the difference. It's not enough just to talk about it; we have to do it. It's not enough just to have legislation and frameworks and toolkits, we actually have to make implementable steps. So what I've done in the last four years is to turn everything which was just policy and instruments into toolkits for implementation. We've just completed, for instance, a performance management programme, workshop, a five day intensive workshop that our European, two European members came, but we have three in all, and our nineteen African countries, so that it's not just helping governments in terms of their aspirations, but it's helping them by providing the real tools so they can implement what they promised to do. Every government wants to do what it says on the 'can', everyone, but the question they always ask is how do I do that when I haven't got the money, I haven't the acuity, I haven't got the skill sets and I haven't got the data that I need and so we in the Commonwealth have been looking at how do we get that data, how do we get the toolkits, how do we make sure if one of our countries spends a dollar, a penny, a pound, no other Commonwealth country has to spend the same dollar, penny or pound. When I came in I said I wanted to put the wealth back into Commonwealth, but I also want to put the common back into wealth and this sharing of information, sharing not only what works, but we have to share what has not worked because for so many years we've been fighting for equality in all sorts of different forms; equality for women, equality for race, equality for those who have ability, equality for those who have different religions; equality, equality, equality, But we have to make that real so people can touch it, taste it, see it. It can't just be a dream and what I have seen in the last four years is through our implementation toolkits, we're turning aspirations into reality and that's wonderful.</p>
DR. MALKA	That's a fantastic achievement because I have to say, I think there's nothing worse than reliving a groundhog's day every year, day in and day out and when you talk about the resources, you know, thirty-two countries within the Commonwealth are part of a developmental nature, they don't have resources to waste, so by...
SECRETARY GENERAL	...exactly....
DR. MALKA	...being able to scale up opportunities, making one dollar pay for one thing and not having five dollars pay for one thing, makes absolute sense.
<b>AD BREAK</b>	

DR. MALKA	Today we're talking to the Commonwealth Secretary General Patricia Scotland. We would love to receive your comments on Twitter:@WomanityTalk.
DR. MALKA	One thing that I really wanted to ask you was when you were talking about the domestic violence component and the No More Campaign and the fact that you've been able to quantify that in the Seychelles that they're going to save 65 million US Dollars as a cost for domestic violence, that if you're going to establish an index across countries and once this is in place, the unfortunate thing is that people tend to only take notice, seemingly, when there is an economic cost to something and they can see what they're losing or gaining, but if you've got an index in place, then all countries can see what's happening and understand financially.
SECRETARY GENERAL	<b>Yeah and I think the reality is that it's not that people don't want to do this, but if you are a government and you are really strapped and every department, you know, you've got to put children to school, you've got to build roads, you've got to build hospitals, you've got to have innovation...all these things come and lots of people say look, I'd love to do it but I can't afford it, so you've got to find a way of helping them. I remember I had to do this, I was the Minister for Criminal Justice in the UK and I was given the small task of reforming the criminal justice system and the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said I had to...all I want to do to Patricia is to eliminate domestic violence, that's all.</b>
DR. MALKA	...that's all...
SECRETARY GENERAL	<b>Yeah that's all; well what am I going to do in the afternoon? So one of the things I had to look at is, and people kept on telling me, you know Minister we have no money, we have no money and by the way did I say we have no money and just in case you're not clear, we really have no money. So I said okay, let's ask a different question; let's ask how much money are we spending now on this issue and I asked Professor Sylvia Walby to do an assessment and I said I want you to give me the bottom-line and if, because you know people say the statistics, the statistics and then there are damned lies, nobody believes statistics, so I said I want a bullet-proof figure. You go and tell me what is the irreducible minimum of how much we are spending in the UK on domestic violence, this was 2003/2004; she came back with a figure of 23 billion pounds.</b>
DR. MALKA	23 Billion pounds.
SECRETARY GENERAL	<b>23 Billion pounds; 3.1 billion was on public sector, 2.7 billion was on loss of profitability to business and 17 billion was paid in injury loss and suffering. So I said okay, let's disaggregate that figure, let's find out how much every single department of state is spending on this issue today, let's find out how business is spending the issue. Well look, you're running a business and you are employing human beings and one in three women you are employing will have had domestic violence at some stage, well guess what's happening; that person may be late for work four or five times a month, that person may be absent from work four or five times a month, that person's concentration on your job will be diminished and guess what, the person who is normally assaulting them, pressurising them, will be doing it whilst they're at work because they know where to find them, so what happens, your employee will leave, so all the investment you put in to build that employment walks out the door. So let's quantify how much it's costing you not to do it and once I identified the economic case for addressing this, it was extraordinary. I had these conversations with businesses and they said at the end of it, but Minister, why are you talking about the economic case, it's the moral case.</b>
DR. MALKA	Oh no.

<p><b>SECRETARY GENERAL</b></p>	<p>Oh silly me, how...because they only understood the moral case when they understood the economics and that's not because they were cynical, but people were thinking look I've got so many problems, I can't cope with this, I can't even see how I can find the money to do this. It's not that I don't want to do it, but you show me how and so by 2010 we had reduced the cost of domestic violence in the UK by 7.1 billion, but we've cut domestic violence by 64%, so for every one pound we spent, we saved six; now that makes good economic sense. So what we did when I came to the Secretariat is I thought okay, what's going to happen if we can take the same methodology and let's create a pathway out of violence with and for communities and find a way to enable us to cut the cost we are already paying, so this is not saying to the governments you need to spend more money, we're saying you need to spend the money you are already spending differently and if you do that you will save lives and you will save money and how is that not good for everyone. And so this opportunity for the Commonwealth is we created the toolkits to say to people this is how you do it, we know how to do this; this is a question of us now choosing. We have to choose to work together because what we discovered is governments cannot do this on their own. We need central government, local government, business, third sector, individuals, so if you go onto the programme that we've created on Commonwealth Says No More, it says it doesn't matter if you're a neighbour, this is what you can do, if you're a bystander, this is what you can do, if you're a young person, this is what you can do, if you're an old person, this is what you can do, if you're a business it will take all of us working together, just as with Covid-19, the violence against women is a pandemic. If we had something else that was killing and injuring one in three women in the world or one in three men in the world, we would say it was the biggest pandemic we'd ever seen and so it's a pandemic which has not been addressed effectively, but it can be, and I am so thrilled to see the passion, the energy that is spreading right across the Commonwealth and Gambia is launching their Gambia Commonwealth Says No More this month. I went to Gambia in December, I spoke to the government and all our governments in the Commonwealth have committed to gender equality, all of our governments, it was there in 2018 that the leaders said they wanted to address these issues in relation to women; women's empowerment and violence against women and we are choosing to do this and by working together and sharing what we know, we are going to be the difference we need to make and this is happening because every single one of us are choosing and every woman listening to this program; we need you, we need your voice, we need you to say not in my name, not in my time and we are going to be the difference.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROGRAMME END</b></p>
<p><b>DR. MALKA</b></p>	<p>You have been listening to 'Womanity – Women in Unity' on Channel Africa, the African Perspective and we have been talking to the Commonwealth Secretary General Patricia Scotland. Tune in next week for the second part of our conversation where the Secretary General shares more initiatives from the Commonwealth as well as insights into her life.</p>