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PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY COMPILATION (PART 2)

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	In recognition of International Women’s Day, which is celebrated annually on the 8 th of March, today’s series takes us around the world to hear the voices of international women, ambassadors and high commissioners from different countries who have featured ‘Womanity’ in the past. The theme for International Women’s Day this year is Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a Covid-19 World.
DR. MALKA	Joining us now is the Ambassador of Turkey to South Africa, Eswatini and Lesotho, Elif Ülgen. Ambassador, welcome to the show, it’s so lovely to see you again!
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Ah the same here dear Amaleya, it’s always a privilege and a big pleasure to join you on your wonderful talks, thank you.
DR. MALKA	I was reflecting earlier today that two years ago we had this wonderful gathering at your residence with women ambassadors, high commissioners from across the globe, reflecting on International Women’s Day, it was a very different environment.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	That’s true, I was thinking of the same moments, hopefully we will have them repeated.
DR. MALKA	So, with that in mind, what are some of your views regarding this year’s theme for International Women’s Day?
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Actually I was very happy when I received your wonderful email, which was explaining your aim in organising this series of webinars with women ambassadors and women leaders of South Africa and there are so many of us [laughs], but I think achieving an equal future in a Covid-19 world, which was already chosen by the United Nations as the theme of this year’s Women’s Day and indeed Women’s Month and I know in South Africa you are never short of commemorating and celebrating issues that relates to women. I think it’s very, very valid because we have all been now more than a year dealing with this pandemic and we read and learn and suffer ourselves that women in communities all around the world, let them be developed, underdeveloped, well-educated, least educated, but women had a specific suffering when compared to the rest of the other community members. They suffered more economically, they suffered more from a violence perspective, they suffered more in terms of the feelings that a woman has inside to bring up a safer, healthier, better future, bringing up their children, the youngsters in the community, all the values as we share as women, or just you know, providing safe and secure food and water and [sanitise] for our families and for our beloved ones; even that feeling that we can’t do it anymore or we are facing this much of challenges I think made women more and more depressed, so I found it very, very relevant to talk about really this year of how this whole women’s issues has taken and another very vile dimension in face of Covid-19. Obviously South Africa and Turkey are not, you know, saved from this very unfortunate drama of Covid, but ya, I was thinking all of

	<p>these themes during these days particularly when we are approaching Women's Day globally.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>And thinking about Women's Day globally and the fact that it is a, well it's not a United Nations event, but United Nations Women most certainly has a strong footprint and impact on the way that it unites people together over a particular theme. Over the years there's been various international instruments which promote gender equality, be it things like the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and some governments, rather some countries, have established ministries and departments which are purely dedicated to women's issues and although I absolutely support these initiatives because it gives a focus point on women, I can't help thinking that unless men are involved in gender equality, it's only seen as a women's problem and not society's problem; what are your thoughts?</p>
<p>AMBASSADOR ÚLGEN</p>	<p>Amaleya I can't agree more with you. Indeed I would also like to add not only that men starts to take it as serious as we or those people who really write and read about women's rights, but also I find a specific role for mothers; it's the mothers who bring up the men, who in many cases, turn a good life into a misery, a heaven into a hell in a women's life and these women can be their partners, their wives, their daughters, their lovers; it doesn't matter, but those men, they are brought by women as well and I think the drama lies here, especially in traditional communities and my country is not an exception and I see this also in South Africa where tradition has a very, I would say guiding, influencing in good and sometimes in bad senses, influence on the bringing up of the communities. We see throughout these traditional norms sometimes, even mothers bring up their younger sons with a different perspective than their daughters and this creates the first discrimination, even when a daughter and a son is given birth, this discrimination starts and I think the danger lies very much there. So we have to really go back as the very, very early ages of bringing up our children, that the ideology that you are equals, should also be in the minds of the mothers and then of course with that mother now letting their children grow up with that intention, that you are equal with your sister, you are equal with the other sex, when you go to school, when you sit at the dinner table, when you go outside, you are always equals, I think that would really create the biggest difference, but again reading about this gender, particularly maybe we should just quickly touch the gender based violence issue, which so adorably the president of your republic, President Ramaphosa, had put forth during the very harsh days of the pandemic, I think it was last year in June or so, in one of his speeches he said that this country, South Africa, is fighting two pandemics at a time; one is the Covid and the other one is the gender based violence and of course I can just state this for many countries around the world, including Turkey, I think this should be maybe the year where we also learn and teach not only the fight against Covid, but equally the fight against gender based violence. In many countries Covid has unfortunately brought more into the surface, how widely gender based violence is affecting our everyday lives and how miserably women suffer because of gender based violence, but again, I am still believing that we have to take it back, it is the responsibility of men more than women, it's the responsibility of families, particularly of mothers, to fight against this phenomenon and ya it is a societal problem, it's a global problem, we cannot eradicate it but at least we can reduce it because human nature has everything in itself, has the good and the bad, has the wild and has the peace, has the love and has the hate inside, but of course and then we have to have introduced the measures. Like also in Turkey, just like in South</p>

	<p>Africa and I very much welcome the legislative work that was immediately submitted to the South African Parliament during the lockdown days and I really look forward to that piece of legislation to come into force, also in Turkey there have been introduced new cases of legislation, we have one of those countries where, like South Africa, where we have ministries, ministers, bureaucratic institutions to protect women, to fight against gender based violence, to promote women's rights, but we are not there at a perfect situation there and unfortunately we can also see and let me again give the example of South Africa which is so impressive when on paper you look at the parliament, which is half occupied by women, then you look at the government, which is almost 50% consisting of women, but when you look at the problems of women in this country, they're not produced even one fourth of the population that represents the nation at those highest levels.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>When you talk about that point, what stands out for me is you can have legislation, you can have government representation, but unless instruments are acted upon by the people, because it is the people who are going to be driving the change and when I was listening to you, you really expressed the power of women, she's got the power on how she raises her children, those children are going to go out into society, those children are going to have children of their own, so I listen to you and really it underscores the power of the women.</p>
AMBASSADOR ÚLGEN	<p>Exactly, we are the most powerful living creatures on earth, there is no doubt about this, women, and I think they are also gifted by God Almighty, because we have got so really natural powers, instinctive powers and also we are very...we are survivors, if you look at the history of women and I don't want to of course discriminate against men, I'm the mother of three sons, but this also helps me to witness firsthand how powerful we are, by nature, so I couldn't agree with you more dear Amaleya.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>On that point about women, please can you use this platform to share some of the developments of women in Turkey?</p>
AMBASSADOR ÚLGEN	<p>Thank you, as I just said, it is an ongoing effort and I don't think any country is free of that effort, including even countries like New Zealand and Australia who are the, you know, up-runners in women's rights. Everybody has something to do and this is an everyday ongoing effort and Turkey has its share, of course we are also a country 80 million people, mostly younger population, very similar to the population outlook of South Africa and we have our own challenges that come also partly because of our traditional living styles, because of the family values; family values can sometimes be very protective for the women and promote women's rights, but they can equally also be harmful sometimes. So we always need a protection by the government, by the state, by the legal system that really gives equal rights when a problem is being faced by a man and a woman. So in the recent years Turkey has been constantly improving its legislation and Turkey is also party to all, I can say proudly, international instruments that protect, that are there for the protection of women's rights, to uphold women's rights, but as we've just said, being party to them and even having the legislation sometimes cannot help, but it is of course one of the basic steps that a government should do. We have ministries, we have bureaucratic structures, we have legal structures and we have a very strong civil society also to extend the arm to Turkish women, however, in the recent years we are now facing another phenomenon, which is the murder of Turkish women, I mean this</p>

	<p>goes beyond violence against Turkish women, but even on these cases there is a very, very high awareness which combines every segment of the society, from the most conservative to the most liberal and that's why there is of course a constant struggle to do better, to fight better and to put measures that would really protect women automatically and I'm very proud to witness that. Coming back on the women's heritage in Turkey, I'm also proud of our history, like South Africa should be proud, because going almost a hundred years ago to the days of our national struggle led by our national leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and that was a struggle from the collapse of the empire, the Ottoman Empire, to build a mother nation state, in that struggle women took an equal role with the men, they went to the front, they fought with the Turkish army, they fought for their land, they fought for their rights, they fought for their men, for their husbands, for their sons, for their brothers and it was a joint struggle and we were very lucky that we had also been awarded, I mean I don't want to use the word awarded but we were given the right equally with men in our...in one of our first constitutions as early as the 1930s, that even countries like Switzerland and in France and in England, the right for example to elect and be elected as a woman, Turkey is one of the first countries in Europe to claim that right for its own women. And that's why also our national history we have very strong women in politics, we have strong women lawyers as early as 1930s, we have women doctors, pharmacists, in every sphere of life we have women figures, we have Jet pilots. The first Jet pilot of Europe, of NATO, of the military alliance was a Turkish Jet pilot and I just recently learned this again and I was so embarrassed that I didn't know it earlier. Coming back to the career for example, today I can proudly say that our figures in the Foreign Ministry as women diplomats are almost as good as the Nordic countries and of course when it comes to women's rights I think we should all be comparing ourselves with those wonderful Nordic countries which do very well in protecting women's rights. So the Turkish Foreign Ministry is one of the few foreign ministries in the world where the population of female diplomats and not only secretaries or officers, but I'm saying career diplomats, are more than almost two fifths of the whole population and as ambassadors we are currently out of two hundred ambassadors, we have fifty-five currently serving in the system and out of these fifty-five ambassadors we have I think thirteen or fourteen female ambassadors only in Africa, whereas we have forty-four embassies in the African continent. So the figures are very encouraging, I believe and I go back to the first sentence, this is an ongoing effort and it's a grassroots effort as well, unless your people, your own women in the country they fight for their rights, they just stand up and shout for themselves, actually not many people can help you.</p>
DR. MALKA	And lastly Ambassador, please give us a few words that you'd like to share for International Women's Day.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Oh, believe in your own strength, we are so strong.
DR. MALKA	Thank you so much for joining us, as always, a pleasure having you on the show.
AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	Thank you very much Amaleya and happy Women's Day and I would like to also rephrase the wonderful South African saying; "you hit a woman, you hit a rock" I love this one and we have a similar saying also in Turkey that maybe we should end on this note.
DR. MALKA	And what is the saying in Turkey?

AMBASSADOR ÜLGEN	“bir kadın dağ gibidir”, it means a woman is like a mountain, you know, you can’t just go through a mountain, so we are as strong as a mountain. You hit a women, you hit a rock.
DR. MALKA	Thank you so much again.
DR. MALKA	That was Ambassador Elif Ülgen, the Ambassador of Turkey to South Africa, Eswatini and Lesotho.
AD BREAK	
DR. MALKA	Joining us next is the Ambassador of Norway, Dr. Astrid Helle, who is the Ambassador to South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, Madagascar as well as Lesotho. Ambassador thank you so much for joining us today in our special on International Women’s Day. Interestingly, we’ve just had a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador, Elif Ülgen, and she ended the conversation talking about gender equality from the perspective of her country, but emphasising how well the Nordics do and I think that given our celebration of International Women’s Day and gender equality has been very, very much a paramount theme, that we must pass credit to the Nordics and Norway for your achievements.
AMBASSADOR HELLE	Thank you so much Amaleya and thank you for having me, I really appreciate it. I think when it comes to the Nordic countries it’s a testimony that it’s not only about women leadership today, but it’s about societies that have developed the social equality and reduced inequalities for a hundred years. So it was through societies at that time led by men and even before women got voting rights that we started to have trade unions and legislations to reduce the oppression of the majority of people by a minority.
DR. MALKA	And it demonstrates almost how long it takes for societies to change over time, but bearing in mind the positivity and the almost I’d say the leadership qualities that have happened and occurred in the region. We know that during the pandemic of Covid-19 some female leaders have led their nations brilliantly; how do you think that having female leadership contributes to achieving gender equality?
AMBASSADOR HELLE	Yes, thank you very much, it has been very interesting to follow the debates on why countries with female leaders seem to be able to fight the pandemic better, examples have been mentioned by or when it comes to Germany, New Zealand, the Nordic countries and a few others, so I think first of all we must have some humility because we don’t have the end of the pandemic yet, but I think it goes both ways but there are women leaders who have maybe certain characteristics in common, but also that the kind of societies who choose women leaders are maybe the kind of societies that are better equipped to fight the pandemic. Society there again with less inequality, with free education, with free health for all, not because we got money from the sky, but because you have a fair taxation system where those who can contribute do so and everybody can enjoy a minimum of a welfare state. So I just wanted to lay that foundation first and then we can add a certain number of qualities that I think we have been more aware of; first we fought for women’s rights and then the gender equality from a human rights perspective, which I think is very legitimate and then I think that we found out that both politically, economically in society there was a great advantage of having gender equality. So after maybe that first period of fighting for women’s rights from a human rights perspective, there was in addition a recognition that there was a value of having women leaders and leaders in their own lives or of companies or of countries and so there seems to be a certain number of qualities that women leaders have. For a long time there was a feeling

	<p>that in order to lead you needed to look what the men do and then do the same, then you could lead too, but if you look closer to it, you can see that many men leaders are not very well performing, it's not that they have made so fantastic societies, also that they are so great models. Somehow I think also we have come to a place where we can recognise some values that women having been taking to the table, both politically and in companies, one of them, it's hard to be general when it comes to gender difference, but just a few of them, one is to be a bit humble in the sense that you don't take your conclusions for granted, you don't take yourself to be above good advice, you build on inclusivity, so that I think it's a good thing and it has proven also in the companies. Women are very often seen to be less self-centred than men, so it's not me and my career and look at me how great I am, but it is to be centred around the task that you are performing and your success is measured in the success of your country or your economy or your family. So less self-centred and then in my view it's also the ability to lead by example and lead through transforming a society by convincing people, not by forcing, not by showing that you are the strongest, that you can oppress and that you can command, but to convince people, dialogue with people, explain to people and show empathy, understand that they experienced hardship. Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway early in the pandemic, she was invited to a press conference only for children, where she wanted to have a dialogue with them because they understood this pandemic, they understand that freedoms is changing and they were very concerned, so it's something worth building from the whole society the understanding of what are we going through and what do we all need to do in order to protect the most vulnerable among us.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Can you use this platform to reflect for a moment on a couple of women, which I know would be hard to narrow down, from a Norwegian perspective who have been important figures.</p>
AMBASSADOR HELLE	<p>I can say there is one evident in Norway and her name is Gro Harlem Brundtland and she was the first woman prime minister in Norway, she was three times prime minister and she was also the head of the World Health Organisation after that and very early, already in the 70s, she led that commission but laid the foundation on the concept of sustainable development, so how do you both have economic growth without destroying the planet and so she was a very important role model and I would say not only because of being a leader, but the way she was a leader. She was also a mother of four children and she had a great empathy and she had a great understanding of the situation and of people in the world and in Norway, it's a great solidarity with those in it. I think this is very important also that she was not a woman trying to be a man. The current prime minister I think is a very important role model also, she is prime minister for the second time, the first one she was head of the Labour Party, the current she is head of the Conservative Party. She started at school in very difficult conditions because she has a very strong dyslexia, but she then developed other qualities, including a fantastic memory and oral communication skills and she showed also that you can get over difficulties that you face early in life and she was very much remarked in Norway when she became prime minister for the first time and some journalist wanted to visit her at home and it was very chaotic and she had also small children and she said okay, this is how it is in my home, but what I do is I am a politician, so you focus a bit away from what I do in the private life and the shoes that you are having and the dress you are havening and listening to what I have to say. So there also I</p>

	<p>think as a role model in the sense that you can be whatever you want as a private person and you can dress as you want and be at home as you want and then you are a politician for being a politician. So I think also they're leading by example in a sense, of letting women define themselves and not being defined by another. Also Angela Merkel is fantastic in that regard, she has been an extraordinary role model also for women. I just want to mention also in Norway the case, not somebody who is not a woman leader but there are very many women who are impressive because they over-win hardship and they overcome difficulties in their lives and in their societies, that's an author of Somali origin who is then also now Norwegian, she came as a refugee and she is author of a number of books and she has put focus also on the social control that takes place in some migrant communities and she is a very open and vocal lesbian. So I think also its very important that role models that come from a variety of parts of society and not only as political leaders.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Listening to what you've said and the women that you've shared their examples and a little bit of a narrative into their backgrounds, it seems that in the Norwegian context that people have got the freedom to be who they are and to live out whatever frame of their identity they choose to at the time, that they're not boxed into one particular stereotype.</p>
AMBASSADOR HELLE	<p>Yeah so I think also maybe a society with a greater gender equality, it becomes a society where you will not necessarily blur the lines about what are men's qualities and women's qualities, but it will much more be determined on the individuals, what are my qualities as individuals and that can be for men a liberating factor and it can be so for women also and hopefully it will also be a society where you do not define people by the colour of their skin, by their disability, you don't define people by their sexual orientation or gender identity. So in that sense I have never understood people who can be feminists but they are racists and I can never understand somebody who is fighting racism but then who is homophobic, so I think also it's an acceptance of a general otherness in society, which should encompass also the broader understanding of what it is to be a human being.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Great lessons, thank you Ambassador. As we close out your segment, please could you share a few words for International Women's Day?</p>
AMBASSADOR HELLE	<p>Yes, I want to congratulate all women, I would like to quote like James Brown said in one of his songs; "Say it loud, I'm black and I'm proud" and I think we must also sing I'm a woman and I'm proud, I'm proud as a girl and I'm proud as a grown up and I'm proud to be contributing to my society and I think the great pride for women, which really goes also to the first issue of your interviews on who is performing well and fighting against Covid, it is a quality of advancing the rights of women in general. So the pride that you can either contribute through the legislation or economy, but also, to be a good person to the woman that you see next to you. Thank you very much.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you so much Ambassador.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>That was Ambassador of Norway, Dr. Astrid Helle.</p>
<p>AD BREAK</p>	
DR. MALKA	<p>Joining us next is the Ambassador of Mexico to South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe; Ambassador Ana Luisa Fajer from Mexico. Welcome to the show Ambassador!</p>
AMBASSADOR FAJER	<p>Thank you very much Amaleya, it's so wonderful to be here with you today.</p>

DR. MALKA	Ambassador this is, as you know, a celebration of International Women's day and in this segment of the show we'd like you to tell us a little bit more about, in your perspective, what have been some of the important gains that women have achieved in recent years as a celebration of this event?
AMBASSADOR FAJER	<p>Thank you Amaleya, let me, to answer your question, let me refer to the three main moments in the feminist movement, because I have been reflecting very much on the different stages of the movement and today what have we gained, definitely we have moved forward, but there's still a lot to do. So if we look back in history we can see that in the eighteenth century, equality, freedom and rights were shaped in reference to favourable opinions regarding women's social integration, but in the nineteenth century, let's say between 1850 and 1920, the first wave of the feminist movement emerged demanding rights from male power systems, the inclusion of women in the institutional apparatus and clearing the path for the debate of equality. So the distinctive element in this way was the right to vote. In Mexico women voted for the first time in 1955, it's not that so long, if we think about what we have gained at the political level, so the suffragettes movement make a good progress but was not able to undermine the patriarchal structure, the patriarchal parts to the extent of promoting a real transformation of social attitudes. So this led to the second wave, which took place between 1970 and 1990, which was marked by the struggle of sexual and reproductive rights, among other rights they demanded also the recognition of the economic value of domestic work and also the demand for equality in terms of wages and opportunities for men and women. The third wave of feminism, which takes place between 1990 to date, has been marked by a criticism of the two previous waves and why; because cultural and social elements were not considered. This is the first time when inter-sectionality is part of the debate and by this I mean the consideration of the relevance of taking into account other vulnerabilities such as race, such as ethnicity, as class, as sexual preference, so this is a big movement. But the thing here is that I definitely recognise all the gains, mainly in the political stage, not that much in the economic, in the private sector, if we look at the number of women CEOs, it's not that high, it could be higher, in the political stage we have made a good progress in the parliaments, in the congress, but still it's just a little less than 25%, there's still a long way to go and I think and I would like to highlight the main challenge in this trouble is violence against women and girls. I think if this crime doesn't stop, if we don't put an end to this terrible crime, we cannot talk about equality, we cannot say that we have reached the goal and actually President Ramaphosa has called it the second pandemic, no, the violence against women, because let's say the transference of the public space to the private space, so before we had this separation between the public space, the office, the school and then this is part now of the private space. So before, yes, inequality existed or problems in the family, but then now it's exacerbated, everything is intensified.</p>
DR. MALKA	You're completely right. Turning towards more of a leadership dynamic, I thought that the theme of this year was very pertinent of women in leadership; achieving an equal future in a Covid-19 world. As a female leader, you represent Mexico abroad and I mean I look at the list of countries that you're responsible from Africa and I think it's almost half the continent, but nonetheless, what are some of the leadership strategies that you found to be most effective?
AMBASSADOR	Well let me divide the answer into two. One is what happens inside my

<p>FAJER</p>	<p>office in a broad sense of the world and then the outside world, what is the leading role in the outside world. So, inside my office I think that leading by the example is very important, using an inclusive language, using also a cross-cutting gender approach in every single action that we undertake. The other thing is to incorporate women, more women, to the team, if I have the opportunity to hire a woman or a man, I would choose the women in the first place, obviously I will consider her capacity, but I think in certain moments quotas, affirmative actions are definitely needed. So the other thing is lead in an inclusive mode, I think inclusion is so important, because this is the opposite of exclusion and we have been excluded for so many years, for decades, so now I mean if you're a leader you have to lead in an inclusive mode, make your team feel like part...like they are part of the discussions, that they are part of the decision-making and then you empower your team, your women in the team. My team is 70% women and I'm so happy and so proud of every single woman, this is a diverse composition, we are women from all over I mean and we really...I really incorporate them all the time in our discussions, in our conversations and this empowers them to really feel more secure of themselves, to dare to speak, to raise their voices and the other thing is lead with a critical awareness and with a sustainable perspective. Having this critical awareness all the time and with a perspective, I think this is key in order to really reach out the goals, but in a sustainable mode, because if not it will be just conjuncture, it's celebrating the International Women's Day, yes on the 8th or in the case of South Africa celebrating in August, the whole month, but if we don't commit to a critical awareness and sustainable perspective, it will be harder for us to reach the goals of gender equality. And in the outside world I would say that I really take every single opportunity to join a discussion, to join a group of women, to bring more women to those spaces to discuss and obviously men are welcome and there are a few men that are approaching those spaces and this is obviously very welcoming, I do the same in my office, I talk to men, I invite them, we invite them to incorporate to these discussions because it's not just a women discussion or a women commitment, we have to have men on board. So but I take every single opportunity to participate in discussions, to contribute with good practice as in my country for instance, to reflect and to make proposals, contributions toward gender equality.</p>
<p>DR. MALKA</p>	<p>Staying with let's say the Mexican Agenda and viewpoint, I understand that very recently there has been an announcement of the Feminist Foreign Policy, which is the first in Latin America; please tell us more about that, how it came about and what it aims to achieve?</p>
<p>AMBASSADOR FAJER</p>	<p>Sure, thank you Amaleya for this question, I think it's very important and very pertinent. In January 2020 the government of Mexico launched this Feminist Foreign Policy; this is the first Feminist Foreign Policy in the global south actually. There are feminist foreign policy in Sweden, they were the first and then Canada and France and other countries in Europe, but in Latin America and particularly in the global south, I would say this is the first Feminist Foreign Policy with particular elements, such as intersectionality. We have learned from the past, we have learned from all these feminist movements and we incorporated these categories into this Feminist Foreign Policy. So it's a set of principles from the foreign policy perspective to guide government actions to reach gender equality, to make a more prosperous society, more equal society, so we are committed to do this and at the level of the Foreign Ministry we are making visible equality, it's not just that it exists, no, it's visible, you can see equality</p>

	<p>going on and obviously fighting for a ministry free of violence against women and girls, this is at the core of the Feminist Foreign Policy as well. And obviously in the terrain of the multi-lateral forum, its bringing women to be part of the delegations, to be part of the decision making processes, to play an active role in whatever happens, in whatever discussion takes place. So we are not allowing forum with no women for instance, if there is a forum with no women, there's a boycott you know, and social media helps a lot with that, so we immediately have this eye that okay just men, forget it, we are not part of that. So it's empowering women at the political level but also at the economic level, in the rural areas as well, their participation in politics as well, so it's a whole movement, so we have to be considered at the national level, because that's the card. We can be as coherent in the multi-lateral forum, but if you are not consistent at the national level, this is lost, so this Feminist Foreign Policy, the idea is that every single secretary in the cabinet and then from there downwards, we have to abide by this Feminist Foreign Policy in order to be consistent.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Thank you very much for sharing and I wish you and the country all the best as that policy becomes implemented and hopefully it serves as a motivator for other countries in Latin America and the greater global south to follow through with like thinking.</p>
AMBASSADOR FAJER	<p>Exactly, hopefully yes.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Will you please use this platform to tell us about one or two significant women from Mexico?</p>
AMBASSADOR FAJER	<p>Sure. When I was thinking about it, it was very difficult to choose but I chose two women that are really, that have not been recognised as they should. We don't know them I mean they are not a public person such as Frida or the artists who are much more visible, these women are not visible, so a very good thing is to give visibility to two very powerful women. One is Leona Vicario who was a journalist and she participated in the movement for independence from Spain, this happened in the 19th century, in 1910. She came from a very wealthy family and she used her money because she believed in Freedom, so she was part of the movement of independence, giving money to the insurgent movement and also weapons. She was in prison and a very indicative moment if you like was when Lucas Alaman, he was a politician, a Conservative politician and a writer, wrote her a letter saying that I mean like diminishing her participation in the movement saying that well, he thought that this heroism was a romantic heroism; she was following love, no, so Leona Vicario said in a very well written letter, very, very pretty straight forward, she said you know what Mr. Lucas Alaman, love is not always the mobile for women's action, I'm free to choose and I decided to help the movement, to be part of the movement because I believe in the freedom of my country and I follow a struggle very patriotically, I'm a patriot. So I mean obviously [laughs], a no more was written and said, because she was pretty straight forward and clear. And the other woman that I really admire a lot is the first ambassador of Mexico to several countries, she was a diplomat, she's Amalia González Caballero, she can be considered a woman with the greatest political power in the mid twentieth century. She was a diplomat, she was a writer, she was a member of the president's cabinet and she was an ambassador to Columbia, to the United Nations, to Switzerland, to Austria; she was really very powerful. She was instrumental in getting the vote for women,</p>

	<p>the right to vote for women, so she was a character and she's not visible at all, so now we are recuperating this women diplomat. She also wrote theatre pieces and some essays talking about things that were taboo at that time. These two women, I chose them because they are not visible as they should, but they played a very, very important role to make us be where we are, like me be here, she definitely bridged the gap for us to move forward.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And lastly as we close out with our segment today, in honour of International Women's Day, please share a few words of inspiration or wisdom that you'd like to convey.</p>
AMBASSADOR FAJER	<p>Absolutely. Well, I would say as I said in my first interview with you, I think a year and half; sit at the table, I would tell women and girls sit at the table, raise your voices, look for mentors and mentor other women. Make the battles for gender equality yours, feel a sense of appropriation of the movement for a world free of violence against women and girls. Contribute to a change of mindset, influence the mindsets of fathers and break the patriarchal paths, the patriarchal structures, I would convey this message to all women and girls in the word-wide.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>That's a great message, wise to words to live by and put into practice.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>That was Ambassador Ana Luisa Fajer from Mexico.</p>
	<p>PROGRAMME END</p>