

# Natal and the peace process:

## *an organiser reports*

**T**he Joint Working Committee (made up of Cosatu, SACP and ANC) started discussions on the Peace Accord as early as June 1991. Our approach as the Alliance in Natal has been to go for detailed reports on the technical workings of the Accord – how it is to be im-

plemented; the obligations it places on our leadership and membership etc.

The JWC had about 40 meetings with branches and locals of the alliance. Of special note is the JWC provincial briefing for the ANC, ANC Youth League, Cosatu, and SACP regional commit-

tees and organisers attended by 120 people. A summarised version of the Accord has been translated into Zulu for wide distribution.

Some of the concerns raised in the discussions stem from the experiences of our constituency in peace agreements thus

far.

They include how to ensure that Chiefs participate in the Accord; the role of the security forces, especially the KwaZulu Police; implementation of the Accord in rural areas and small towns; the role of People's Courts in terms of the Accord. ♦

# Victorious consumer boycott in Matatiele

**A**n 18 day consumer boycott in the small town of Matatiele, near Kokstad, ended in victory for the residents.

Sparked off by the imposition of stringent conditions on a 9 August Women's Day march, the residents' demands included the right to free political activity and an ANC office in the town; opening of all facilities to all residents; upgrading of the taxi rank; improvement of municipal toilets; provision of proper and affordable houses instead of tin shanties; fair and equal treatment of customers by businesses; opening of all schools to all races and the freedom of workers to join trade unions and the acceptance of cheques issued in

Transkei. The resignation of the District Magistrate was also called for because of his racist approach.

The boycott began on 2 September. Businesses lost about R12.5m in the first week of the boycott. Heavily armed men in brown uniforms patrolled the streets with police harassing and searching people.

### MEETING

A meeting between the Boycott Committee and the municipality resulted in the municipality agreeing to meet most of the demands – including the withdrawal of the men in brown uniforms, suspected by residents

of being paratroopers.

On the question of trade unions the employers undertook to educate employers about that. The matter of the racist magistrate had been referred to the Minister of Justice who had invited written submissions.

### DEMANDS

Residents decided on 18 September to suspend the boycott to give the authorities a chance to implement the changes. The municipality has begun implementing some of the demands but it has been found that the schools were open to all races only from sub-A to standard 5. ♦