

## **DURBAN September 30 1999 - SAPA**

### **MCBRIDE AMNESTY HEARING POSTPONED UNTIL NEXT WEEK**

The amnesty hearing of former Umkhonto we Sizwe operative Robert McBride was on Thursday postponed in Durban until Tuesday next week. McBride and eight others were applying for amnesty in connection with a number of incidents carried out by the African National Congress' former armed wing, MK, in and around Durban between 1981 and 1986. This included the bombing of two beachfront bars, Magoos bar and the Why Not bar, in June 1986 in which three people died and 73 were wounded. McBride was set to testify on Thursday afternoon but the hearing was postponed for a legal representative from Pretoria to be present at the hearing. McBride was part of the ANC's special operations unit when he planted the beachfront car bomb. The unit's commander, Aboobaker Ismail, testified on Monday and Tuesday, and apologised to the victims of the Magoos bar blast. On Thursday afternoon he met privately with some of the victims who afterwards described the exchange as emotional. On Thursday morning, former ANC operative Lester Dumakude testified about his role in the special operations unit. He told the hearing that his role was to provide materials needed by operatives and to set up safe houses in Swaziland to assist members of the unit. He said he was not involved in the unit's operations. Operative Ernest Lekoto Pule also provided the unit with material but could not say if he had in fact given McBride the ingredients which constituted the bomb planted outside Magoos bar. McBride was scheduled to testify on Tuesday.