

## *The Secret Safari*

### SYNOPSIS

"*The Secret Safari*" is a 52 minute documentary that tells the story of one of the most successful and audacious military operations in the armed fight against apartheid in South Africa. It is a character-driven journey of courage, cunning and suspense, that maintains the audience in tense apprehension with tightly shot reconstructions of events using the original participants.

In the 1980s the African National Congress (ANC) hatched an astonishing plan that took years to perfect and which ultimately influenced the future of South Africa. Between 1986 and 1993 a company created by the ANC, called **Africa Hinterland**, operated a business taking tourists on overland sight-seeing trips which crossed the border into South Africa in contravention of international sanctions. Unbeknown to the tourists, under the seats of this Bedford truck were secret compartments housing military arms and explosives destined for the frontline of the underground military struggle against the notorious apartheid system.

The film follows the Africa Hinterland operation from its conception by highranking ANC operatives in London through to its implementation on the dusty highways of Southern Africa as it carried unwitting tourists across plains and borders. The film shows the unselfish solidarity of the foreign volunteer drivers who risked imprisonment to help a society far-removed from their own. We see how the weapons were packed and concealed for the journey, and then later retrieved and distributed through the ANC underground by the military wing of the ANC, the MK (Umkhonto We Sizwe).

Against the background of Mandela's release and negotiations for a peaceful settlement, we discover why the MK took the independent decision to continue the Africa Hinterland operation and the infiltration of weapons and ammunition into South Africa.

The Africa Hinterland operation was never exposed and made some 40 trips across the treacherous South African border loaded with a tonne of weapons on each journey over a period of seven years from 1986.