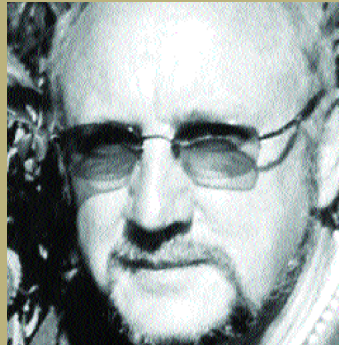


Leonard Slabbert (1953 –)

MENDI DECORATION FOR BRAVERY IN SILVER



**AWARDED TO
LEONARD SLABBERT
FOR A SELFLESS ACT THAT
LED TO THE SAVING OF
EIGHT PERSONS FROM
DROWNING IN THE
SAULSPOORT DAM IN
THE FREE STATE**

On 1 May 2003, a bus carrying 61 COSATU members to a rally in Charles Mopeli Stadium in Bethlehem, plunged into the Saulspoort Dam.

Two passengers swam to the edge of the dam and alerted Leonard, Slabbert, (a technical official at Dihlabeng Municipality) to the accident. Slabbert saw a group of people on the roof of the submerged bus.

Without any hesitation, Slabbert rushed to launch a boat and, accompanied by Rudi Kok and Marco Rautenbach, overcame the adverse conditions and the extreme cold of the dam water to rescue passengers from the submerged bus.

Leonard Slabbert's presence of mind, quick thinking and fearless actions resulted in the saving of the lives of eight fellow South Africans.