

Ongoing revamp for Absa Centre

Boost for urban regeneration in city

URBAN regeneration in Cape Town received a boost recently with the launch of the new-look Absa Centre at 2 Riebeeck Street.

The skyscraper has been a landmark on the Foreshore since 1968. The owners, The Patrick Partnership, and property managers Rennie Property, revealed ongoing plans for a revamp of this building that will make it a major hub in Cape Town's legal, financial and publishing districts.

When the hoardings around the base of the building are removed they will reveal the latest in shop fronts. Frameless glass and 24/7 lighting create a floating effect and provide retailers with innovative display windows, says John Foley, managing director of The Patrick Partnership.

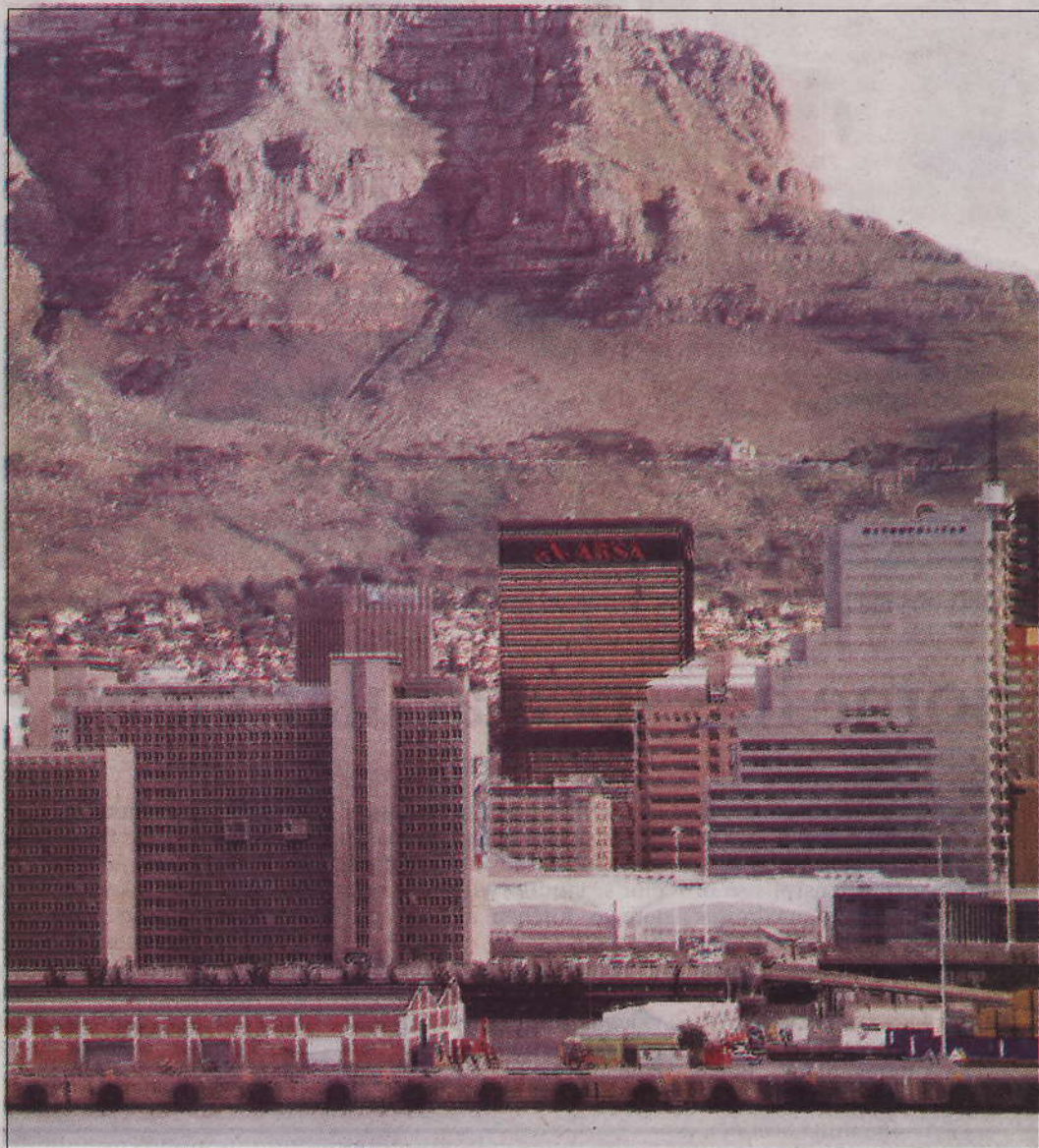
"The retail area is linked to the buzzing pedestrian mall, office and hotel – creating a busy 24-hour retail centre point. Continuing through into the office floors of Absa Centre itself, a redesign of the common areas is planned.

"The Riebeeck Street entrance will pay homage to the building's heritage and the award-winning Seagram building in New York that inspired it. A series of black and white photographs and sketches will illustrate the history of the two buildings and the Seagram building's reputation as the benchmark of the International style of architecture."

The Seagram building is a skyscraper at 375 Park Avenue, between 52nd Street and 53rd Street in midtown Manhattan, New York City.

It was designed by German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, in collaboration with the American Philip Johnson, and was completed in 1958.

The 38-storey structure is



The landmark Absa Centre on the Foreshore is to be given a new look

considered to be one of the finest examples of corporate modernism.

In the entrances to the building, gilt-edged frames will provide a contrast to the monochrome walls and floors. This clean, crisp modern décor with imported off-white tiles and

luxurious black velvet wallpaper will extend from the foyer through the common areas.

The building also features the largest windows in the city – three-quarters of the façade is glass – allowing tenants spectacular views of Table Mountain and Table Bay. Also on the

cards is a revamp of the hotel.

"The Absa Centre is a landmark which has long been home to many important businesses. We are thrilled to be part of the regeneration of this important business district," says Steve Rennie, director of Rennie Property.