

# Four children die every minute in Mozambique

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From Lawrence Kilimwiko

Cividale, Wednesday. FOUR children are dying every minute in Mozambique as a direct effect of drought and war engineered by the racist South African regime in its destabilisation campaign.

A Mozambican delegate to the World Congress on "The Rights of Children" warned in this Italian town that the present situation in Mozambique needed an urgent solution.

"The question is not conventions for children's rights, but immediate supply of medicine, food and transport", he stressed to the shocked hall.

UNICEF says 50 per cent of children born in both Mozambique and Angola in 1986, will die before the age of five or will remain crippled permanently unless food supplies are provided immediately.

The destabilisation war raging in the two former Portuguese colonies caused the death of 140,000 children last year alone, with a current rate of 360 children dying every day, today.

A Venezuelan delegate said that the indebtedness of the country, a product of the existing inequalities in the international trading system, had forced 80 per cent of the people to live in the margins of survival with a heavy toll on the children and pregnant mothers.

Calling for the elimination of the existing imbalances and inequalities, Rosita Caldera of the national paper, *Venezuela*,

said it was difficult to eliminate malnutrition from the people living under the crushing jaws of poverty.

Caluse Julie of *Le Monde* newspaper in Paris said the challenge of mass media in the current crisis which weighed heavily on the children must be directed at tackling the roots or problems and to arouse public opinion to react accordingly.

"The bell that tolls for the infant tolls to the humanity", he said, adding that it is not enough to write on the plight of street begging children in Brazil. One must link it with financial agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the basic cause.

Meanwhile, African mass media should focus their attention on the dissemination of developmental information as their contribution towards the child survival and development crusade, a delegate said here.

Discussing the role of mass media in the advocacy towards the child survival, rights and development, the delegate said the African media should stop imitating the moribund Western press which had never understood African realities.

The three-day congress for the International Club of Journalists for Children's Rights was expected to be closed last night after three days of live discussions on the contribution of mass media in the survival of children. It was attended by over 150 delegates from all over the world.