

Mozambique peace talks postponed

ROME. A NEW round of Mozambique peace talks which were scheduled to start on Friday has been postponed to next week, mediators said.

Mediators said on Friday that representatives of the Maputo government and MNR (Renamo) had not yet arrived in Rome for the 11th round of negotiations. The session had already been postponed from the end of April.

The talks, which began almost two years ago, have been repeatedly delayed despite a drought in Southern Africa which has left three million Mo-

zambicans facing starvation.

"There is no row — it is just the physical problem of getting both sides to Rome," a spokesman for the religious community of Sant' Egidio said.

He added that the talks, in which the Italian government, the Sant' Egidio community and other Roman Catholic churchmen are mediating, should now start next Tuesday.

Italy's foreign minister, Mr Gianni de Michelis, said this week that the

United States, Britain, France and Portugal, Mozambique's four other major Western aid donors, would join the talks.

Mr de Michelis said he hoped an accord could be reached before the end of June but diplomats following the negotiations warned this was being optimistic.

They said the long delay in resuming the talks highlighted disagreements still in the way of any peace settlement for the former Portuguese colony. — Ziana-Reuters.

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