

R580m pledged for *Argus* Mozambique peace 17/12/92

ROME. — International donors have promised about R580 million to build peace and avert famine in Mozambique.

The largest single pledge, R27 million, was made by the European Community. Italy, which hosted a two-day donor conference for Mozambique, promised about R214 million.

The conference brought together Western donors and countries such as Russia and China which held ideological sway over the former Portuguese colony after it gained independence in 1975.

Mozambique pressed for the gathering to ask for aid to rebuild after a devastating 16-year civil war and one of its worst droughts this century.

Not all countries at the conference made pledges, saying they wanted to hear more about Mozambique's problems before deciding on an amount. These potential donors included the United States and several Scandinavian countries.

Mozambican diplomats said they hoped donors would have met their request for R1 160m in aid before the conference ended.

The southern African country — which wants to avoid following the experience of Angola where a peace agreement is on the verge of breakdown — said it needed help to implement a peace accord signed in October between the government of President Joaquim Chissano and right-wing Renamo rebels.

United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has called for a mission of 7 500 troops, police and civilians to monitor the peace accord.

Italy last week approved the dispatch of about 1 200 troops to Mozambique as part of the UN effort. They are expected to arrive at the beginning of January.

Mozambique also needs food aid for about 1,5 million refugees returning after the war and another four to five million people displaced within the country.

UN officials have said Mozambique could be the next famine

emergency after Somalia if aid does not reach refugees.

The Rome conference will discuss care for Mozambique's refugees, the integration of demobilised rebel troops into society and the establishment of a new electoral system.

The conference follows a two-day World Bank meeting in Paris last week at which the bank announced international donors had promised R2 240 million for Mozambique's long-term reconstruction programme.

The \$760 million includes around R397 million in food aid, with the rest intended for economic and social projects plus import support, the Bank said. — Sapa-Reuter.