

Now UN *Argus* moves into ¹⁷/₁₂/₉₂ Mozambique

R1-bn to demobilise troops, feed refugees

The Argus Foreign Service and Sapa-Reuter
NEW YORK. — The United Nations Security Council has unanimously agreed to send about 7 500 troops, police and civilians to monitor a ceasefire and elections in war-torn Mozambique.

It will be the fourth major peace-keeping force established by the UN this year and the 13th in troublespots around the world.

Because of the high cost of the operation — estimated at more than R1 billion by the time it ends next October — the council resolution calls for a phased deployment and strict reporting on progress. In this way, it hopes to keep expenses to a minimum.

The UN Operation in Mozambique (Onumuz) will oversee the peace accord signed in Rome on October 4 between the former Marxist government headed by President Joaquim Chissano and rebels of the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo), led by Mr Afonso Dhlakama.

The troops will demobilise 110 000 Mozambican soldiers and secure the delivery of food and humanitarian aid to 1,8 million returning refugees, as well as 3 million already receiving assistance.

Onumuz is also charged with helping to organise presidential and legislative elections late next year.

A small advance mission, including about 25 military observers, arrived in October and an interim UN special representative was named to head the operation. He is Mr Aldo Ajello, an Italian official with the UN Development Programme.

UN Secretary General Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali said in a recent report that Onumuz's military component would comprise five self-sufficient infantry battalions each with 850 men, an engineer battalion, three logistics companies, a headquarters company, and air, communications, medical and movement control units, plus 354 military observers.

It will also include 128 police officers and hundreds of civilian staff, with up to 1 200 international observers for the election campaign.

The troop-contributing countries have not yet been named but diplomats said Italy, which played a key role in negotiating the Rome peace accords, is likely to provide a large contingent. Offers have also been received from Uruguay and Bangladesh.