

We've received little, says Mozambique

MOZAMBICAN Minister of Finance Saloma Muugambe said in Lusaka yesterday that Mozambique had received very little economic help from the international community to offset the massive losses incurred after the closure of the border with Rhodesia.

Speaking on arrival at the Lusaka International Airport he said: "The total amount of this monetary help received was inferior to the total amount of damage done to the economy as a result of the closure of the border.

Mr Muugambe, who did not say how much Mozambique had received from the international community,

said in May last year his country lost more than 1.5 million escudos as direct damages of the border closure.

However, the Minister said with the help of all African friendly countries and the socialist block, Mozambique was forging ahead in her economic development.

As a first step towards economic independence, Mr. Muugambe said the Mozambican government was at present re-organising the infrastructure in order to save the economy.

He said, however, that it would take a long time before the economic trend could be changed because

"we have to create new conditions."

Mr. Muugambe, who is accompanied by the governor of the Mozambican Central Bank, Mr. Alberto Casrino, said he was on his way to Mauritius to attend a six-day meeting which will consider effective and ever-lasting ways of strengthening economic and social ties between African countries.

The Minister of Finance, Mr. John Mwanakatwe, who met his counterpart at the airport, will also lead a two-man delegation to Mauritius to attend the meeting which starts next Monday. - Zana.