CHAPTER VII

THE DECISION TO RESUME DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
WITH THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

(JULY 1969)
The defeat of the Royalists' final offensive in mid 1968 was followed by the suppression of the radical Republicans. There ensued a period of tranquillity in Yemen lasting exactly one year which made it possible for the post-November leadership of the YAR to effect certain changes in the country's foreign policy, starting with resumption of relations with West Germany. It took nearly six months of negotiation, both direct and indirect, between the YAR and the FRG, before a decision was finally taken in May 1969 to restore the broken diplomatic links between the two countries. It was well worth the effort, as far as the YAR was concerned, because Bonn was prepared to make certain economic concessions in exchange for the resumption of relations.

Unlike the other cases covered by this study, this decision came as a result of a pre-planned strategy and not as a response to external stimuli. The feedback effects were manifested by the enhancement of the economic capabilities of the YAR as well as the régime's political credibility. As a result of the decision, the international environment had also become relatively more favourable towards YAR foreign policy objectives.

**Operational Environment**

As the decision to resume broken relations with West Germany was mainly a response to internal needs, two of the three environmental factors which directly, but differently, influenced the decisional setting were internal, namely political stability and the economic crisis. The third was related to one of the main objectives of the country's foreign policy, namely the achievement of balanced relations
with East and West. On the other hand, the readiness of West Germany to provide aid *quid pro quo* for recognition constituted the stimulus for the decision.

**Internal Political Stability**

The Royalist encirclement which threatened Sana'a in the winter of 1967/68 had relaxed by September of the latter year. A subsequent offensive, at the beginning of October, which was organised and led by al-Badr himself, succeeded in once more encircling Sana'a, but had collapsed by the end of the month. This proved to be the last serious military effort by the Royalists and in the following months the Republican forces took the initiative and carried out a series of mopping-up operations in the northern territories. Consequently, the Royalist hold on these territories was greatly reduced and by May 1969 the Republican forces were in control of up to two thirds of the country and most of the population. As an indirect result of these Republican victories many tribes deserted the Royalists and declared their allegiance to the Republican government instead. On 25 July 1969, the last of the Hamid al-Din commanders in Yemen, Amir Abdallah ibn Husayn, was assassinated in the main northern city of Sadah by its own citizens, an event which effectively marked the end of the Royalist counter revolution in Yemen.

During the same period, and especially during January 1969, the government, in accordance with its policy of reconciliation, encouraged the return to Sana'a not only of Royalists but of dissident Republicans who shared the government's belief that the war should be settled by reconciliation with the Royalist side. This policy
inevitably triggered fierce opposition from the radical Republican forces, mainly followers of MAN who controlled the most effective units in the army: the shock troops and the parachute regiments in addition to the Popular Resistance Forces (PRF) (Kuwat al-Mukawamah al-Sha’abiyyah). During 1968, this opposition from the left became an open challenge to the government. However, in two crucial confrontations the government asserted its authority and eliminated the left-wing pressure on the decision-making centre. On one occasion, in March 1968, government troops were able to foil an attempt by the PRF in Hudaydah to seize an arms shipment. On another occasion fierce battles were fought in Sana’a itself between followers of the MAN and troops associated with the Ba’ath and loyal to the government. In these battles, which took place over three days (23-25 August, 1968), the government again prevailed but at some material and political cost. In January 1969, government troops killed the leader of the opposition forces within the army, Major Abd al-Rakib Abd al-Wahhab, who had returned back from Algeria where he had been in exile for his part in the August fighting. Capitalising on these incidents, the government took a number of measures to ensure the suppression of further opposition from the left for some time to come.

These dual achievements, i.e. military victory over the Royalists and the suppression of the left, removed any formidable political constraints and enabled the post-November government to put its moderate policies into practice.
**The Economic Crisis**

A combination of political and environmental factors led to a serious deterioration in the economic situation during the latter half of the 1960s. The drought which began to hit the country in 1966 worsened during 1967 and in 1968 it crippled the agriculture which at that time was contributing 80% of the Gross Domestic Income. Matters were made worse by the increasing cost of the war which, since the withdrawal of the UAR forces in late 1967, the Government was having to meet from its own meagre resources. As will be seen later, the Kurshmi Government which was formed on September 2, 1969 was left to tackle this difficult situation.

What concerned the YAR leadership in late 1968 was the lamentable lack of vital foreign aid which the government needed to embark on its programme of economic development. Since the defeat of the Royalists in October, Kadi al-Iryani the Chairman of the Republican Council and Premier al-Amri had both been proclaiming a new era of peace and economic development, but they were painfully aware that the foreign aid, on which the country had always depended in the past for the implementation of development plans, was no longer easy to get. Since the YAR severed relations with West Germany in 1965 and with the USA in 1967, Western aid had been suspended. In 1968 only Algeria and Romania were providing limited aid to the YAR in the form of commodity credits while the bulk of Soviet aid came in the form of military supplies.

The resumption of Western aid was clearly dependent upon the resumption of diplomatic relations and since the YAR had initiated the break in the first place it was logical that it had to take the
initiative in bringing about their restoration. Immediately after they came to power in November 1967, the moderate leaders called for the re-establishment of relations with the USA, West Germany and other Western countries. Mainly in deference to Saudi Arabia with which they had common economic interests, none of those countries responded at that stage. In early May 1969, al-Iryani made it clear that the YAR wanted an immediate resumption of cultural and economic relations with West Germany and the USA. Diplomatic relations, he said, could follow later when the time was right.

However, during the negotiations between Sana'a and Bonn the question of diplomatic relations became a bargaining matter when the FRG made their resumption a condition of economic aid in any quantity. During the pre-decision negotiations with the FRG, the direct relevance of this factor became evident when the resumption of diplomatic relations was linked to the amount of West German aid. Later, in a radio interview on 7 February, 1970, Ahmad Barakat who succeeded Djahman as foreign minister in the Kurshmi cabinet attempted to rationalise the decision by stating that the restoration of relations with West Germany was motivated by the need for economic aid.

The "Balanced Approach" Policy

One of the basic principles of YAR foreign policy had been to remain resolutely "non-aligned" and not to be drawn into the ongoing power struggle between the superpowers, the USA and the USSR, or their respective blocs. Ideally, this meant the establishment of balanced relations with both blocs; but the hostile attitude of the West towards the Yemeni revolution and the positive attitude of the
socialist states meant that balance was far from easy to achieve. Socialist countries had been among the first twenty countries to recognise the YAR in the first two weeks of its inception, and close relations between the Yemeni Republic and members of the socialist bloc had continued uninterrupted ever since. In mid-1969 the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and China had embassies in Sana'a, while the GDR and Romania had consulates. However, only three Western countries (the FRG, USA and Italy) had ever recognised the YAR, and Italy alone had maintained uninterrupted relations with Sana'a throughout the war period. Italy was therefore the only Western country with an embassy in Sana'a which looked after the interests of the USA, FRG and the UK within Yemen.¹⁰

Subsequent non-alignment was made even more difficult during the Royalist offensive in late 1967 and 1968 as the YAR had become almost completely dependent on military supplies from the Soviet Union and, to a much lesser extent, China. Although this was a measure of survival on the part of the YAR, Saudi Arabia used it as a pretext to justify its continued hostility to the Republican régime in Sana'a. In December 1967 and January 1968 Saudi Arabia expressed concern about the allegedly inevitable Communist penetration into the Arabian Peninsula through Moscow's aid to the Yemeni Republic.¹¹ An American source believed that the Saudis' cool reception of repeated overtures from the YAR during 1969 was explained by the apparent close relations between Sana'a and Moscow.¹²

Estrangement from the West deprived the YAR not only of much needed economic aid but also technical assistance. Prior to the breakdown in relations between Sana'a and the two Western countries, the YAR had received aid from the USA and FRG to an estimated value of $42 million
and DM20 million respectively. This was less than the aid received from the USSR and China whose aid to the YAR was valued at $100 million and $46 million respectively. During the last three years of the 1960s the flow of foreign aid to the YAR virtually ceased as a result of the regional and international realignment taking place in the Middle East. While most Western countries were still refusing to re-establish relations with Sana'a, by the beginning of 1969 the USSR was engaged in scaling-down its relations with the YAR and instead cultivating its relations with the new and more reliable ally in the south, namely the PRSY.

The need to achieve balanced relations with both East and West was uppermost in the minds of the YAR leaders and constituted part of the operational environment at the time the decision to re-establish diplomatic relations with the FRG was made. In January 1970, al-Iryani alluded to the bearing this imperative had on the decision when he said that YAR foreign policy over the previous months had implemented one of its basic elements, namely non-alignment and positive neutrality.

The Mutual Overtures

During 1968, the efforts made by the FRG to resume relations with Arab countries, in exchange for economic aid, constituted the stimulus for negotiations. The framework for a mutually beneficial arrangement between the YAR and West Germany was already in place and in fact dated back to the first three years of the revolution. It was after the GDR had recognised the YAR on 5 October, 1962 that the FRG, in a bid not to be outdone by Berlin and to forestall any reciprocal
recognition by Sana'a, uncharacteristically broke with its Western allies and became the first Western state to recognise the YAR on 23 October, 1962. By doing so, it was made difficult for the YAR to respond to the GDR's gesture without being ready to sacrifice its relations with Bonn, especially as the FRG was already providing economic aid to Yemen. At that time, West Germany was fully committed to denying international recognition to its rival state and had actually severed relations with governments which failed to comply with its policy. This policy had its roots in the policy expressed in 1957 by the FRG Foreign Minister Walter Hallstein, when he said that governments which recognised the GDR were in effect recognising the post-war division of Germany and must, therefore, be considered to be committing "an unfriendly act" against West Germany. In the circumstances, because of its economic needs and the need to secure the recognition of as many Western governments as possible, the YAR was aware that its interest lay in maintaining good relations with Bonn.

In the first three years of its existence the YAR had benefited from the competition between the two German states, with each trying to increase its influence in Yemen as well as in the rest of the Arab world at the expense of the other. Although denied full diplomatic recognition, the GDR was at first satisfied with consular representation in the YAR. However, as relations between Sana'a and Bonn began to deteriorate following reports of the FRG's intention to recognise Israel in 1965, the GDR seized on the situation to ingratiate itself with the Arab world, including Yemen. In mid-April 1965 it was no coincidence that Paul Shulz, the Deputy Prime Minister of East Germany, made an official visit to Sana'a just as the West German experts were leaving Yemen in the aftermath of the violent
anti-FRG demonstration in Ta'iz a month earlier.\textsuperscript{18} On 14 May, 1965, Premier Ahmad Nu'man formally announced the severance of diplomatic relations with the FRG in response to the latter's recognition of Israel.\textsuperscript{19} The GDR wasted no time in granting the YAR two loans, the first of $5 million in April 1965 and the second of $2.7 million in June 1967.\textsuperscript{20}

In 1969, when relations were restored between the YAR and West Germany, it was on a Yemeni initiative. According to official Yemeni sources, the YAR governing elite was aware at that time that the FRG offering economic aid to Arab countries in exchange for the resumption of diplomatic relations and they decided to benefit from the opportunity.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{Perceptions of the Decision-Makers}

The decision was taken amid conditions of internal political tension which was reflected in the instability of the government. Following the ejection of the left from the post-November government in the aftermath of the 1968 upheavals, General al-Amri formed two cabinets dominated by the conservatives, the first on 14 September, 1968 and the second on 3 April, 1969. But al-Amri's influence and his role in formulating state policies were undermined by opposition from within the army, as well as differences with al-Iryani over issues which included the prospect of reconciliation with Saudi Arabia.\textsuperscript{22} Al-Amri tendered his resignation on 8 July, 1969, one week before the decision vis-à-vis the FRG was announced, although by that time it had already been adopted. These developments inevitably strengthened al-Iryani's position at the centre of the decision-making system. Most
specifically, the mounting tension within the régime increased the need for his skill in keeping the peace between the various Republican factions at a time when the return of the dissident Republicans had consolidated the dominance of the conservatives over the decision-making process.23

Notwithstanding these cabinet changes, the membership of the decision-making élite remained almost the same and comprised of al-Iryani, Muhammad Ali Uthman, al-Amri, and a number of others who had no formal decision-making authority, namely Shaykh Abdullah ibn Husayn al-Ahmar and Ambassador Muhammad Ahmad Nu'man. The latter was the son of Ahmad Nu'man; he had taken part in the Free Yemeni Movement alongside his father and played an active part within the circle of the moderate Republicans in the pre-1967 era. He was among the dissident Republicans who had returned to Yemen at the beginning of 1969 and had quickly assumed a very important role in the formulation of the country's foreign policy as an advisor to the Republican Council (al-Madjlis al-Djumhuri).

Al-Iryani's view of West Germany's readiness to provide economic aid was naturally affected by his awareness of Yemen's economic needs. Ever since the Royalist threat had waned in mid-1968, he had concentrated his energies on the resumption of relations with the West and reconciliation with Saudi Arabia, believing that in this direction lay the only path to a peaceful settlement of the war and the achievement of economic prosperity which had constituted the raison d'être of the September revolution.24 Al-Iryani had always been moved by the harsh economic conditions prevailing in Yemen and saw the improvement of these conditions as one of the main tasks of the revolution and the principal mission of the régime. He constantly
drew the attention of those Yemenis who called for a revolutionary anti-West policy to the bleak realities of life for the Yemeni people. As a country having neither the capability nor the motivation to take an active part in either the regional or the international power struggle, the YAR should seek balanced relations with the big powers. Attempts, he said, should instead be made to convince the two superpowers, the USSR and the USA, of Yemen's determinedly non-aligned position. This way, the YAR would secure its independence and obtain badly needed economic assistance.  

Pragmatism was among al-Iryani's personal attributes. In late 1968 when the West German government made it clear that it was ready to exchange economic aid for the resumption of diplomatic relations, he concluded it was unrealistic and unfair that the Yemenis should maintain the stance taken up by the Arabs against the FRG in 1965, while other Arab states with much healthier economies had practically abandoned that policy. In fact, at a press conference on 18 March, 1969, al-Iryani complained that while the YAR had continued faithfully to observe the agreed policy in the name of Arab solidarity, other Arab countries were receiving German economic and cultural aid. He observed that, apart from being unfair to Yemen, the policy itself was also damaging to the Arab cause which it was intended to serve. In a press interview on 17 July, his reply to Arab criticism (mainly Syrian) of the decision encapsulated his point of view. He commented on the much vaunted Arab unanimity over the boycott of West Germany by saying:

"In fact, there is no Arab unanimity. Several Arab states did not sever relations with West Germany from the start. The fraternal Jordanian government, which is directly concerned
with the issue for which the boycott decision was taken, has resumed relations with West Germany. The boycott by the states which has so far put the decision into effect has been nominal. These states withdrew their Ambassadors but kept embassy officials, counsellors, attaches, secretaries and so forth in place. Above all economic relations with West Germany were maintained and West Germany continued to offer loans, projects and aid to these states. Only Yemen applied a boycott that was firm, final and almost total. We can say, then, that our attitude is not a departure from Arab unanimity because there is no Arab unanimity."

As to the claim that the Yemeni decision was harmful to the Palestinian cause al-Iryani said:

"Everything helpful to an Arab country is helpful to every other Arab country and finally to Arab issue number one - the Palestinian issue... If recognition of Israel by West Germany was the reason for a decision to boycott West Germany - although not all Arab states applied the decision - logic tells us that we should boycott all States which recognise Israel, including the major powers in the West and East..... Finally I would like to say that the boycott policy does not serve the Palestine question. The contrary is true. Instead of leaving the field open for Israel alone, it will be better for us if we are challengers who work for our own interests and against those of Israel."
The Decisional Process

The strategic decision taken on 19 May, 1969 to resume diplomatic relations with the FRG was preceded by a tactical decision, made three months earlier. Even before the May decision was made, relations in other non-political areas were resumed. This made it difficult to distinguish between the various stages of the decision-making process. In the following investigation, implementation refers to actions taken after the formal announcement was made on 15 July, 1969.

The Pre-Decisional Activities

Most of the procedures and activities which preceded the decision concentrated on encouraging universal support for the move. This seems to suggest that there was no consensus inside the decision-making élite, in addition the issue was considered to be a highly sensitive one. Although no written sources were available to the researcher, talks and interviews with the decision-makers themselves indicated that from the procedural point of view, the pre-decisional process was divided into two stages. From November 1968 when the idea first surfaced, until February 1969, consultations on the issue were mainly confined to the members of the Republican Council, Premier al-Amri, Shaykh ibn al-Ahmar and Foreign Minister Yahya Djaghman. In the second stage, which began in earnest in April, the consultations involved persons outside the decisional core.

Apparently it was al-Iryani who originally told the other Council members of the West Germans' readiness to negotiate a reconciliation. With regard to much needed foreign aid from any source (a resolution was already embodied in the government's manifesto) no objection was
raised. The immediate recognition by both the Yemeni and West German sides of the mutual advantages made it difficult to ascertain, in the absence of documents, which party took the initiative. For the Yemenis, the issue was not the resumption of diplomatic relations with Bonn per se but the extent of aid the country would receive in exchange for resuming relations with the FRG. To explore the possibilities, Yemeni and West German diplomats had a series of informal meetings in Rome, Geneva and then later in Sana'a and Bonn. West German officials also began to make open contact with the Yemeni authorities as early as January 1969. This process apparently began with a visit to Yemen, in the second week of January 1969, by a West German delegation consisting of representatives of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of the Economy. On 17 January, Yahya Djagham, the YAR's Foreign Minister, welcomed "the desire expressed by West Germany" to resume aid to the YAR in the field of agriculture. On 12 March there followed a meeting between the Under-Secretary of the YAR's Foreign Ministry, and Dr. Landau, head of the FRG Interests Section at the Italian Embassy in Sana'a, where the former was informed that West Germany agreed to resume technical aid in the area of communications in accordance with the 1961 agreement between the two countries. Later, on 17 June, Dr. Landau informed the Foreign Minister that his government had decided to send a hundred tons of wheat to Yemen as a gift. West Germany was then asked to provide a workshop to maintain telecommunications equipment, three experts in electricity and experts in the postal field.

There was nothing sinister in the mutually beneficial resumption of bilateral relations, but al-Iryani, like other members of the decision-making élite, realised it would be seen as an indication of the régime's foreign policy reorientation. The leadership was aware
of the bitter opposition of certain leftist-oriented groups to the reestablishment of relations with the West, especially at a time when the political rifts of August 1968 were not totally healed. Because of the sensitive nature of the issue, President al-Iryani began consultations with representatives of the various segments of public opinion. These contacts were intensified after the furor associated with the establishment of the National Council (al-Majlis al-Watan) was settled in March 1969. In these consultations, the position of the intellectuals who represented the various political groups was far from coherent. While some expressed support for the Government's policy of putting the country's need for practical foreign aid before anything else, others opposed it as another fateful step in the direction of the West. Among these detractors were certain of the Ba'athists, followers of the newly formed Revolutionary Democratic Party (al-Hizb al-Dimukrati al-Thawri) and supporters of the pre-1964 régime.10

The most powerful pressure groups, the tribal shaykhs and the army, were also involved in the consultations. The influential shaykhs including ibn al-Ahmar, were generally supportive of the government since this particular issue did not directly involve their interests, but, at the other extreme, the army was the group most interested in the issue. A group of leftist officers in the High Command told al-Iryani personally that they were definitely against the proposed move. They claimed that the resumption of relations with West Germany would alienate the Soviet Union, the major supplier of military hardware, and thus weaken the army. Some of them threatened violent action if the government went ahead with its plans.11 Although this fierce opposition caused some concern to the members of the Republican Council it was clear this group had little support within the army,
certainly not among the middle-ranking and the junior officers. By then the Government had taken effective steps to ensure the loyalty of the army, especially in the aftermath of the August 1968 events which were seen as a challenge to the authority of the political leadership. Among these measures was General al-Amri's creation of new units, like al-'Asifah, under the command of loyal officers. These arrangements proved effective in this case, as the majority of the officers decided to support the Government. There is no precise information as to whether it was al-Iryani's intervention that silenced the leftist officers' opposition, but certain sources have suggested that he somehow encouraged the loyal officers to speak their minds against, and override, their leftist colleagues.\(^{32}\)

There was additional pressure on the government from external sources. The Soviet Union was understandably not pleased with the seemingly pro-West orientation of the YAR government and viewed the resumption of Sana'a's relations with the FRG with suspicion. The Soviets did not express any open opposition to the resumption of relations with the FRG, but actively urged a similar posture towards the GDR. Encouraged by this support from the USSR, the GDR began pressing once more for recognition by the YAR. On 29 February, 1969, it made a formal request for full recognition, saying in its petition that such an action was unlikely to jeopardise relations with Bonn, since the latter had recently established relations with certain other states which recognised Berlin.\(^{33}\) Later, on 17 June, the GDR made another request to the YAR urging that it too should follow the example of other Arab countries which had recently recognised the GDR.\(^{34}\) Although no formal response came from Sana'a, the GDR and USSR kept pressing for full recognition even after the resumption of YAR-FRG relations were announced. It was reported that, in their bid to force
recognition of the GDR, the Soviets had hinted that spare parts for Russian-made weapons would in future only be available from the GDR. 3

How The Choice Was Made

Although al-Iryani and other members of the decision-making élite had, in the case of this decision, had enough time for deliberation, their options were narrowed by the absence of alternatives. The only offer on the table was the West German proposal which, as framed by the FRG Foreign Office, sought restoration by the YAR of its diplomatic relations with Bonn (severed since 1965) in exchange for Bonn's resumption of economic and technical aid, in addition to an initial credit of DM 15,000,000 million to cover the costs of several developmental projects. 3 6 Although East Germany spread a rumour of a competitive offer of aid in exchange for full recognition by the YAR of the GDR, no offer was officially made. Republican Council members agreed that they should accept the FRG offer, seeing no reason why it should have an adverse effect on the YAR's relations with the socialist countries. With regards to any East German offer, the prevailing opinion in the government was that the GDR aid project would, in the light of past experience, probably be of little use. 3 7

It was then clear that no better alternative was available, however the YAR decision-makers seem to have sought to maximise the benefits by dragging things out and asking for improvement in the West German offer. This was confirmed by al-Iryani who stated afterwards that the government had decided "some time ago" to resume relations with Bonn but had delayed announcement of the decision "until talks were completed." 3 8 A Western source believed that the YAR government had
finally seized upon West Germany's severance of relations with the PRSY two weeks earlier to restore its own relations with the FRG. On 2 July, 1969, the FRG announced the freezing of relations with the PRSY as a reaction to the latter's recognition of the GDR a few days earlier. In the circumstances, observers believed that West Germany must have included the DM 10 million it had previously allocated to South Yemen in the package of economic aid it offered to the North.

The exact date on which the government adopted the decision to resume relations with the FRG is yet to be ascertained, but Yemeni sources believe the action took place in late May or at the beginning of June 1969. Although the emphasis was on economic aspects, al-Iryani and other members of the decision-making elite linked the decision to the overall orientation of the country's foreign policy and thus deliberations on the final choice were kept within this inner circle. According to an official, the decision was taken by the Republican Council on the basis of a consensus and was handed down to the government. Instead of discussing the issue, the cabinet simply endorsed the decision without inviting any further deliberation. During the meeting in question and according to the same source, when General al-Amri, the Premier, noticed that the issue was next on the agenda for consideration he told cabinet members that there was no need for further discussion because the decision had already been taken. As a result a study on the issue, prepared at the request of the cabinet by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not considered.
It took nearly two months for the decision to be made public. The delay may have been on the German side, although the Yemeni Information Minister Husayn al-Magbali announced on 18 June that the YAR would not lay down any conditions for the resumption of relations with the FRG. Later, the Foreign Office in Bonn announced that the final agreement was only hammered out between June 29 and July 3 during the visit to Sana'a of Herr Walter Gehlhoff, a senior Foreign Office official. On 15 July, a formal announcement was made simultaneously in Sana'a and Bonn which stated that:

"The Government of the YAR and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany have agreed to restore diplomatic relations. This decision will come into force as of today and the ambassadors will be exchanged as soon as possible. The two governments have also decided to co-operate closely in the economic and technical fields. The two governments are convinced that resumption of diplomatic relations and their mutual co-operation will enhance the friendly relations between their people."

Unusually for such a formal announcement, the statement went on to refer in some detail to the various aspects of the proposed German aid, and there emerged a disparity regarding the total value of aid promised. According to the statement, Bonn was offering help by resuming those development projects which had been suspended in 1965, together with an initial credit of DM 15 million. But in his attempt to justify the decision in a press interview on 9 July, al-Iryani mentioned that the total value of aid was £15 million, over
three times as much and the equivalent of YR 165 million. This suggested a problem in communication between the Republican Council Chairman and his aides, if not between his office and the other ministries concerned.

The first step in the implementation of the agreement was carried out on 16 July when the FRG Embassy in Sana'a was reopened. Two weeks later, on 27 July, a West German ship arrived at Hudaydah carrying foodstuff, constituting the first instalment of the promised aid. During a visit to Bonn by a Yemeni delegation, which included Aham Barakat, the new Foreign Minister, and Yahya Djaghman, al-Iryani's Personal Representative in the new cabinet, an agreement was signed on 28 November, 1969, according to the terms of which the YAR would receive a long-term credit of DM 25 million. Part of that amount (DM 10 million) would be a commercial loan and the rest would finance projects to be carried out by West German firms. Soon afterwards, on 2 and 3 January, 1970, two shipments consisting of ten thousand tons of wheat flour arrived at Hudaydah as another instalment of the aid promised under the agreement.

Feedback

West German aid undoubtedly strengthened the national capability of the YAR as the projects it funded contributed to the modernisation of the country's economic infrastructure. More specifically it financed the improvement of al-Rahabah airport and the asphalting of the Sana'a-Ta'iz highway - two vital development projects. Even more importantly, the positive impact of the FRG aid and the negligible political price the YAR paid in exchange confirmed the rationality of
their new "balanced" approach to foreign relations and specifically encouraged them to think that this policy might soon bring more aid from the West. The political implications of the decision were later alluded to by Kadi al-Iryani in January 1970 when he assessed the performance to date of YAR foreign policy. He said that: "As a result of this independent policy, we achieved several things. We maintained friendship with our (socialist) friends while winning new friendships which would greatly benefit Yemen." During the second half of 1969, the new, more favourable, climate encouraged the leaders of the YAR to feel that the time was right to make efforts to repeat the success of their rapprochement with the FRG by approaching both the USA and Britain with the purpose of establishing relations. Muhammad Nu'man, the roving Ambassador, visited London in the second week of November 1969 in an attempt to convince the British government to recognise the Yemeni Republic.

In the international context the benefits which resulted from the decision to resume diplomatic relations with the FRG far outweighed the negative aspects, the foremost being the reaction of the USSR and other socialist states. They suspected that the YAR was replacing its socialist friends with new "Western" friends, especially since Sana'a continued to ignore the GDR's request for recognition. Until the YAR recognised the GDR on 12 December, 1972, Moscow continued to press the issue forcefully.

In the regional context, the decision had only a short-term effect on the YAR's relations with some Arab states. Aware of the prevailing Arab sensitivity to the resumption of relations with the FRG, the YAR government explained its motives to certain Arab governments, including Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq, Sudan and Syria, before the decision
was made and justified it to the remainder afterwards. Yemen was only the second Arab state after Jordan to resume relations with the FRG and the move provoked some criticism, mainly from the left-wing press. Among the Arab governments only three showed actual displeasure - the UAR, Syria and the PRSY. Syria and the PRSY had special ties with the socialist bloc and were clearly resentful of the YAR decision. At that time the UAR was urging the Arab states to establish relations with the GDR as a reaction to Bonn's support of Israel and was disappointed with the Sana'a decision. However, while the South Yemeni Republic was too preoccupied with its own internal problems to register any protest, both Cairo and Damascus let it be known that they privately censured the Yemeni decision. The UAR did not make any criticism publicly and expressed its displeasure in a discrete manner but, on 16 July, the Syrian Charge d'affaires in Sana'a conveyed Syria's opposition personally to the Head of the Political Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in rather harsh terms, implying that the Yemeni Republic was reneging on its "revolutionary" policy and adopting a pro-Saudi and pro-Western posture.


7. In addition to the substantial oil interests the US was enjoying in Saudi Arabia, Britain also had important economic ties with the Kingdom. At that time, the UK had just concluded an arms deal with Riyadh worth £140 million (see *al-Anwar*, October 19, 1969).


15. No explicit commitment was given by the YAR not to recognise the GDR in return for the FRG recognition of the Republican régime in Sana'a. The New York Times has reported that Bonn made it known that it would recognise the YAR only if the latter promised not to establish diplomatic relations with the GDR. See The New York Times, 24 October, 1962.

17. Until the 26 September revolution, the GDR was represented in Sana'a by a commercial representative. The YAR became one of the few states to establish consular relations with Berlin in the first half of 1960s. A decision was made to that effect in November, 1965, although the YAR consulate in Berlin was not inaugurated until later, on 8 January, 1966. (Ref. unpublished documents of the YAR M DFA).

18. Diplomatic relations between the YAR and the FRG were practically paralysed after demonstrators had demolished part of the latter's embassy building which was still in Ta'iz in mid April, 1965. The demonstrations in Yemen against the FRG coincided with demonstrations in many Arab capitals as a reaction to the announced intention of the Bonn Government to recognise Israel. West German sources alleged the demonstrations in Ta'iz were incited by Egyptian and communist agents in Yemen. (Files of al-Ahram Centre of Strategic Studies, Cairo).


20. See Abdallah Barakat, Masadir Tamwil..., op. cit., p.723.

21. Personal interviews.


23. Personal interview with Ali Lutf al-Thawr.


27. From written replies from the then Foreign Minister Yahya Djaghman to the writer's enquiries dated March, 1989.

28. From unpublished documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) - Sana'a (Political Department, 1969).

29. Ibid.

30. Interviews with officials in the YAR MOFA, Sana'a, December, 1989.

31. Personal interviews.

32. From the writer's interview with senior officers.

33. The GDR note referred to the resumption of relations between Yugoslavia and Bonn, which were just restored after the latter severed relations with Yugoslavia following the recognition of Belgrade by the GDR in 1967. (From the files of the MOFA, Sana'a).
34. The GDR request was amongst apparently identical notes sent to all Arab Governments calling on them to follow Iraq's example shortly after the latter recognised the East German state. (From unpublished documents of the MOFA-Sana'a Political Department, 1969); ME/3102/A/11.


37. Interview with officials, who claimed that there was wide criticism of the project and disbursement of aid, a large part of which was spent on exaggerated salaries for the East German experts.


42. Personal interviews.

43. Me/3105/A.11.


47. Until then, the Italian Embassy in Sana'a was looking after the FRG interests in Yemen while the YAR interests in West Germany were looked after by the Somali Embassy in Bonn.

48. ME/3138/A/10.


53. Personal interviews with the then officials (the two Foreign Ministers Djaghman and Barakat).
54. A Yemeni official who was a member in the YAR delegation to the Rabat Arab summit (September, 1969) told the writer that the then UAR Vice-President Anwar al-Sadat had, during a private meeting between the two delegations, mildly criticised the Yemenis for taking the decision without first consulting Egypt. This was despite the fact that the YAR was among other Arab Governments who were notified \textit{a priori} of the YAR intention.

55. The Syrian Charge d'Affaires had behaved in a meeting with the Director-General of the Political Department in a provocative manner and, on a request by the YAR, was soon afterwards withdrawn by his Government. Personal interviews; unpublished documents of the YAR-MOFA (Files of Political Department, 1969).