

Open to the Middle East: The establishment of the diplomatic relations between Hungary and Yemen

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Hungary's activity in the Arabian region dates back to the 1880s. These initial contact had their roots in economic relations. The First World War put an end to the prosperous trading connections. Between the two World Wars Hungary made some efforts to renew the former relations without any success. Although many honorary Hungarian consulates were established in cities of this region in the 1930s – e.g. Alexandria, Beyrouth, Aleppo, Algir, Bengazi – the commerce has been quite weak.¹

After 1947 the Hungarian foreign policy followed the diplomacy of the Soviet Union which was not interested in the situations of the Arabian regions this period.² This tendency has not changed until the crisis of Suez after which some socialist countries – among others Hungary – turned towards the Arabian states.

Hungary's former relations went through some changes due to the events of 1956. The United Nations internationally condemned the Hungarian leadership. According to this Hungary's relations to foreign countries were limited to the "friendly" socialist countries in the first half of 1957.

The Kádár Government – taking advantage of the strong influence of the Soviet Union after the crisis of Suez – made a successful attempt to break out of the international isolation in Augustus, 1957. The establishment of relations with developing countries was the first opportunity to this.

The first chance to build up diplomatic relations with Yemen presented itself in 1957 when al-Badr, the crown prince, made tours in socialist countries to sign agreements with them. The Hungarian foreign policy took advantage of the given opportunity which resulted in the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Hungary and Yemen on 16th March 1959.

This study aims to refer to those factors of internal and foreign affairs on both Hungary's and Yemen's side which made it necessary to establish relationship. The study tries to demonstrate the events of one and a half year from the first meetings to the signing of the contact. We set the aim to refer to the consequences in practice.

¹ J. Nagy L. Az arab országok a magyar külkapcsolatokban. *Külügyi Szemle*. 2 (1) pp. 114.

² This statement refers not only to the Arabian region but to all the developing countries. Out of these countries Hungary established diplomatic relations with Egypt, India and Argentina until 1950, with 16 countries between 1950 and 1960, and with 38 countries between 1960 and 1970 (Puja F. *Szocialista külpolitika*. Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1973, pp. 90).

Internal policy of Yemen in the first half of the 20th century

Yemen, which was named by the Romans Arabia Felix – “lucky country” – is situated in the south-western part of the Arabian Peninsula where the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea join.

In 1962 Yemen’s territory made out 195 000 km² and it had 4-5 million inhabitants. It had earlier two capitals: Sanna, the most important and the most populated and Taiz, the one which became residence of the Imam³, Ahmed, between 1948 and 1962.

The country’s inhabitants were mostly Persians and Arabs but there lived many people from India and Somalia, too.

The majority of the people lived in tribes, they were nomads and half-nomads. Most of them lived in the mountains of Yemen.⁴

As for their religion most of the population were Muslims – Shiites (Zaidits and Ismailits) and Sunnis (Shafis) – and a considerable religious minority was represented by the Jews until 1952 when 90% of the Jews moved to Israel. The worldly and the sacral power were united in one hand; in the hand of the Imam, who claimed he was descendant of the prophet himself, was a Zaidit Shiite high priest.⁵

Yemen has been an absolute monarchy until 27th September, 1962.⁶ The administrative, legislative and executive power was concentrated in the ruler’s – the Imam’s – hand. As the head of the executive power he had the right to appoint all the officials, not only the ministers, but the simplest doorkeeper, too. The ministers had no

³ „The expression means a leader, example, model or pattern to be followed. In its commonest sense the word is applied to be leader of prayers in a mosque. It is not the equivalent of a priest for there is no priesthood in Islam. The founder of a theological system or school of Islamic law is also termed an Imam but the principal meaning of the word is that of leader of the Muslims. In this sense it is more generally used by writers on jurisprudence than Khalifa (Caliph). The title is generally used by Shiite sects (Ingrams, H. *The Yemen, Imam, Rulers & Revolution*. London, 1963, pp. 154). About the expectations concerning the position of the Yemenite Imam and Shafi’s relations to him see more: Messick, B. *The Calligraphic State, Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993, pp. 37-40.

⁴ Only half million people out of the hole inhabitants of the country lived in to cities or their outer districts (Hottinger, A. *Der Bürgerkrieg im Jemen: Wegbereiter des Kommunismus auf der Arabischen Halbinsel*. *Europa-Archiv*, 21, Apr. 1966, pp. 297).

⁵ The requisite qualifications for an Imam, based on an eleventh-century declaration, were: „*The Imamate belongs by right to that person, descended from Ali and Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, who is wisest in religious questions and bravest in battle, who is of age, of the male sex, sound in mind and body, of legitimate birth, suitably gifted for government, righteous, generous and pious – and wins the Imamate with the blade of his sword.*“ (Boxhall, P. G. *The Yemen – background to recent events*. *Army Quarterly & Defence Journal*, 88, July, 1964, pp. 203).

⁶ Then 80 soldiers led by Abdullah as-Sallal attempted a coup and overthrew the system of Imamate. The republic has been announced, which resulted in an 8-year-long civil war affecting not only the Yemenites but further states in the region, like United Arabian Republic, Jordan, Great Britain and Saudi Arabia, too.

real government offices, they were in fact advisors of the Imam. The Imam who was distrustful against everyone had to be consulted concerning each and every case which made the governing awkward slow.

The Yemenites lived under terrifying sanitary circumstances. Even in the 20th century epidemics were not rare due to the starvation and the lack of hygiene.⁷ Medical care was practically unknown in the country.⁸

Beside the basic educational institutions – which were mostly Koranic schools under the leadership of the ulema – there were only two grammar schools and an elementary military academy where 5% of the children were educated.⁹ The schools offered religious education for money, children were taught only to read and write so that they could study the Koran themselves. In the country there was no university and only a few of the students who could go abroad to study at university after 1930 were given classic university education. Coming home they had to realise that their progressive way of thinking and their desire to act are contrasted with the expectations of the Imam.

As for the economy had been one of the most underdeveloped country of the world in the middle of the 20th century. The country lacked the appropriate infrastructure and there was not even a small mechanical industry. The domestic industry and the small industry were not well developed. For want of industry all the goods which could not be made by craftsmen were bought by merchants in Aden and sold the inhabitants at a profit.¹⁰

The natural resources of the country stayed unopened until the 1960s though, according to the experts, the deeper strata of the ground hid mineral resources like gold, silver, rock salt, coal, manganese, iron ore, lead or oil which can be found on the Tihama plain, in Salif.

⁷ The two most often devastating epidemics were smallpox and malaria; the malaria has been one of the causes of the high death rate in Yemen. Moreover tuberculosis was considered a general illness and intestinal worms were not rare. According to a report of 1960 which was made by the FAO 80-90% of the inhabitants suffered from trachoma (which could lead to utter blindness in the worst case), and 50-80% of the men and women in Yemen had syphilis. The rate of the infant mortality belong to the very high ones on the world scale; it was at least 50% but it reached 90% in some regions. Another problem was that the adults consumed kat in a very big quantity – on average 4 hours long a day – which could destroy the liver and the teeth and deform the face and the mouth cavity – especially by underfed people – within 4 years (Milenkovics, M. A kábítószér – Dél-Arábia rákfeneje. *Cikkek a Nemzetközi Sajtóból.* 8 (3) 1962. pp. 27; MTI Világpolitikai dokumentumok. *Jemen.* Szerk. Györffy Tibor. Budapest. 1963, pp. 5).

⁸ By the end of the 1950s there were only 15 doctors, some European (Czechoslovakian and Eastern or Western German) and Soviet doctors were employed to take care of the Imam, his family and his friends. The civil servants and the soldiers of the government were looked after by some doctors from Egypt (Rouleau, É. „Arabia Infelix”. *Cikkek a Nemzetközi Sajtóból.* 7 (78) 1962. pp. 69).

⁹ (Halliday, F. *Arabia without Sultans.* Manchester, 1974, pp. 92) About the education in the schools of the Koran see more: Messick *ibid.* pp. 81-98.

¹⁰ 90-95% of the import goods entered the country through Aden. Some goods from Hungary were also imported e.g.: textile and padlock (*A Jemennel való kereskedelem feltételei* 1959. április 24. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz 003055/szig. titk. 1959).

Determining basis of the economy were animal husbandry and agriculture; they provided the living of 80-85% of the inhabitants.¹¹ Because of the crumpling of the cultivated land agricultural production was achieved in the small valleys of the bare, rocky mountains, where they worked with hands and adopted the terracing method which had been used in ancient times. The means of production were quite simple and primitive. The fact that the most of the peasants produced only goods which were necessary to life because of being afraid of the taxes which were imposed if there was a sign of welfare contributed to the stagnation of economy.¹²

The most famous and the most important export article was the coffee. In the middle of the 1950s about 60 000 ton of coffee were exported which went down to 10-12 000 ton in 5-6 years and at the end in the 1960s export was at on the same level as during the World War, 20 years before.¹³

In regard of the low living standard, the market of Yemen could import small quantities.¹⁴ Not even in the second half of the 20th century had there been a unified market in Yemen. There was no commercial law, the arrangement of business depended on the wish of the Imam. There were no regulated customs and the measure of the customs depended on the expectations of the local governor, it was varied in the different frontiers.¹⁵

The basic conditions of the international commerce were not present in Yemen. Only one bank functioned in the country, the Saudi-Arabian Bank in Hodeida, which could not transfer money, there could not even be established a letter of credit because of the given conditions. The backwardness was indicated by the fact that there was no common currency in Yemen in the 1960s. The bartering had a significant role, first of all in the underdeveloped regions of the country, the existing money circulation the Maria Theresa rial-silvercoin with the 1780s lines was the leading one. Although this currency was not suitable for its role in the commerce, but it was impossible to introduce paper money due to the series of conflicts in the internal politics. Additionally this had made it necessary to establish financial institutions and to train financial experts.¹⁶

¹¹ Stookey, R. W. *Yemen, The Politics of the Yemen Arab Republic*. Colorado, 1978, 170.

¹² The "zakat", the tax, stated by the Islamic law, reached 12,5% of the income. Sometimes its multiple has been collected, which could reach 70% of the taxpayer (Rouleau „Arabia Infelix" 1962, 69).

¹³ According to the balance of trade in 1961 the import reached 16.836 million dollars (out of which 29% were food stuffs, 7% were tobacco, 17% were textile) while the export reached only 8.161 million dollars trade: the total value of the import goods were 52% higher than that of the export goods (Attar, M. S. al- La République Yémenite et son context interarabe. *Politique Etrangère*. 32 (3) 1967. pp. 281; Halliday ibid. pp. 90).

¹⁴ The GDP reached 300 million US dollar, which meant 70 dollars for one person. The loss of the balance of payment was 58%. The fact that the situation didn't become worse was due to loans and donations (Attar ibid. pp. 281).

¹⁵ MTI ibid. pp. 4.

¹⁶ *A jemeni gazdasági helyzet* 1959. április 8. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz 79/5/szig. titk. 1959.

Many Yemenites left the country to look for better chances in the neighbouring and in more distant countries. Ethiopia, Aden, Somalia, Sudan and Saudi-Arabia gave home to many Yemenites, until the decay of the monarchy more than 1 million Yemenites – more than 20% of the inhabitants – left the country.¹⁷

Considering all this, the statement of János Veress, Hungary's chargé d'affaires of Khartoum, seems to be right, as in 1959 analysing the inner conditions of Yemen he claimed that the system of the Imamate could not be upheld in its condition longer than 1-2 years.¹⁸

Foreign affairs of Yemen in the 1950s

After the country gained independence until the end of World War II. Yemen isolated from the outside world. When it stopped being isolated, established contacts with Arabian countries – it joined to the Arabian League in 1945 – and with some international organisation (It became the member of the United Nations on 30th September, 1947.).¹⁹

In the scope of its attempts to establish contacts with foreign countries at first Yemen concluded an agreement Egypt in 1945 which was followed by reciprocal delegations of diplomats. The same steps were taken in 1946 towards Iraq but this relation could not develop because of the confused situations after the death of Yahya Imam in 1948. The foreign politics with the Aden-Protectorate ended in failure, which resulted in taking compulsory steps on Yemen's side. This was the reason of the three-side military agreement signed in Djidda on 21st April, 1956 by Yemen, Egypt and Saudi-Arabia.

Yemen was one of the first countries, whose independence had been acknowledged by the Soviet Union on 1st November, 1928, when the two countries made a friendly agreement. The harmonious relations were interrupted for a short time, when the diplomats of the Soviet Union withdrew from the region in 1938. The political, economic and cultural relations were renewed in the first half of the 1950s. The trade agreement, signed on 8th March, 1955 proved the success of the renewed relations. On 31st October,

¹⁷ Beside the countries mentioned above a high number of people lived in Baghdad, Port Said, Cairo, Marseille, Cardiff and London (O'Ballance, E. *The War in the Yemen*. London, 1971. pp. 32). About the stages, tendencies and destinations of the emigration from Yemen see more: Swanson, J. C. *Emigration and Economic Development: The Case of the Yemen Arab Republic*. Colorado, 1979. pp. 50-55.

¹⁸ *Jemen belpolitikai helyzete* 1959. április 5. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-200-79/szig, titk. 1959; *Belpolitikai helyzet Yemenben* 1959. Augusztus 3. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-200-187/szig, titk./ 1959.

¹⁹ Yemen was member of FAO – Food and Agricultural Organization –, WHO – World Health Organization –, UPU – Universal Postal Union –, and ITU – International Telecommunications Union – within the UNO membership. Moreover it was supported by the United States Technical Assistance Board by the UNESCO and by the WHO (Cortoda, J. *The Yemen Crisis*. Los Angeles, 1965. pp. 4).

1955 the second friendly agreement was concluded. Then, in June of 1956 prince al-Badr paid a visit in Moscow, and the 2 countries made an economic co-operation agreement.

Yemen established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China on 24th September, 1956. China entered a credit contract with Yemen, China's support amounted to 70 million Swiss franc, which had to be paid back in 10 years.²⁰

Yemen concluded a friendly agreement and trade agreement with Czechoslovakia on 5th July, 1956. Ahmed Imam accepted the offer of the Czechoslovakian government, according to this youngs of Yemen could study free of charge at Czechoslovakia universities on Faculties of Medicine and Engineering. Czechoslovakia and Eastern-German experts worked in Yemen, mainly doing business. The Czechoslovakian doctors were paid by the Yemenites.

The Imam found it important to influence the South-Arabian tribes which lived in the Aden Protectorat. The Imam regarded South-Yemen, which has been under English occupation since 1839, part of his country and required the abandonment of the foreign supremacy. The Imam's policy on this issue wasn't successful. The first reason for this was that the situations in Yemen were not attractive enough for the Arabian tribes, which lived in the Protectorat as they had a bit higher living standard than the Yemenites. The Imam could not go too far concerning the activities against the British would make difficulties over the transport of the relatively cheap imports from the harbour of Aden to Yemen.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Yemen after the World War II., on 11th May, 1946; the two countries made friendly-, trade- and shipping agreement. According to the agreement of 24th May, 1947 Yemen got a support of 1 million dollar for buying American surplus products. In July of the following year prince Abdullah made a tour in the USA, he met President Truman and had a talk with several American industry concerns.²¹ Ahmed Imam seized power in 1948 after the death of Yahya. The contacts made with the USA had not been fulfilled during Ahmed's regime. Consequently the diplomatic relations between the two countries were interrupted for a short time and the USA acknowledged Ahmed Imam's regime only in February 1950. The relation of the two countries stayed tense.

As the western powers did not manage to get a foothold in Yemen the Italian legation fulfilled the tasks of the Western countries. Italy had influence on Yemen between the two World Wars, as well, some Italian doctors and experts worked continuously in the country. The Italian embassy had good relations to the leaders of the country.

Yemen strove for good relations with Saudi-Arabia, it was weaker than its neighbour and tried to promote the interest of the Yemenites who lived there. Because of the debate over the province Asir Yemen and Saudi-Arabia were on bad terms with each other for a long time. According to the "Islamic Friendly and Arabian Fraternity Contract" which was signed on 20th May, 1934 in Taif – become known as Contract of Taif – and the

²⁰ Its relations with the Soviet Union and China have became worse by the end of the 1950s. It was the result of the fact that the Imam has denied to fulfill his duties which were recorded in the credit contracts or to give any kind of concession to these countries in Yemen by way of compensation.

²¹ Lenczowsky, G. *The Middle East in World Affairs*. London, 1982. pp. 616.

relation between the two countries got back to normal. Though, Yemen had some troubles because of the invasions of the Saudi-Arabian tribes.²²

By the year of 1959 in the capital, Taiz existed embassies of the Soviet Union, China, Italy, Ethiopia, Western Germany, America and Great Britain, in the former capital Sanaa existed embassies of Egypt and Saudi-Arabia and trade branch offices of Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany. The abandonment of the isolation didn't mean the ceasing of the exaggerated suspicion and fear of the outside world.

Effects of the events of 1956 on Hungary's foreign affairs

Although the UN seemed to be unable to stop the intervention of the Soviet Union in Hungary, or to bring the terror under control, it offered to put pressure on the Kádár's regime to form the basis of a more liberal internal policy. The Mandate Examining Committee of the UN proposed on 8th November, 1956 to postpone the decision concerning the credentials of the Hungarian legation. The motion had been adopted by the general assembly, additionally in 12th November, 1956 the Hungarian issue was put on the agenda and according to the proposal of the Secretary General it had been decided to set up a special committee with five members, which had the task to look into the matter, hoping that the UN's observers will be admitted to Hungary. The facts that the Hungarian issue was kept on the agenda and that the credentials' acceptance was postponed were disadvantageous concerning the international judgement of Hungary. Consequently, the foreign policy of the Kádár's regime was limited in the first half of 1957, it extended to the members of the Warsaw Pact, China and Yugoslavia.

The first chances of the outbreak of the isolation, which was comparable to the country's international position of 1945, meant the establishing of relations with some developing countries. János Kádár found it important to get into touch with newly liberated countries and in his speeches emphasised the importance of the liberation movements. He adopted the point of view of the valid communist doctrine on this issue, regarding all the former provinces allied and antiimperialist independently of their political system.

As the Hungarian Foreign Office from the beginning found it significant to be on good terms with developing countries, it succeeded to break out of the international isolation in August, 1957, taking advantage of the growing prestige of the Soviet Union in the Arabic region. Thanks to this a "goodwill delegation" led by Károly Szarka, deputy Foreign Minister went to India, Burma, Indonesia, Nepal, Ceylon, Syria, Egypt and Sudan. The most influential politicians of the third world among others Nasser, Nehru received them.

During the tour of the "goodwill delegation" the UN's five membered committee made an official report on the Hungarian issue and it planned to introduce the report on the meeting of the general assembly in autumn. So, it was not surprising that the Hungarian delegation paid visit in developing, non-aligned countries which were members of the

²² *Yemen külpolitikája* 1959. Április 8. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-10 79/6 szig. titk./ 1959.

UN. The delegation endeavoured to obtain UN votes and it succeeded in achieving it in the Arabic region as – especially in Egypt and in Syria – they related the Hungarian situation to the conflict of Suez.

The USA's unsuccessful politics in the Middle East contributed to strengthening the relations. The Eisenhower Doctrine of January, 1957 stated that there is a power vacuum, which contradicted to the widely spread and fruitful Arabian nationalism. The leaders of the Arabian states found it humiliating to be controlled by another state on the pretext of the war against communism. Because of this, Nasser assured the Hungarian government of his support on 29th August, 1957, when he had a talk with the "goodwill delegation" at his home, he said "*the Hungarian issue is used as a propaganda in the UN, namely first of all against the Soviet Union*".²³

Yemen had been mentioned among the range of Arabian countries which would abstain or assure Hungary of their support. Nasser added that Yemen store for independency in its foreign affairs, so it was sure that the country would support Hungary's issue. It was a very important statement for the delegation and it had a significant role in making effort to establish relations between Hungary and Yemen, which was previously present in the conception of the Hungarian foreign policy.

The chance of diplomatic relations between Yemen & Hungary

In 1957 Saif as-Islam Mohamed al-Badr, crown prince of Yemen, deputy President, Foreign Minister, Minister of Defence – leading an official delegation – made a longer tour in several socialist countries to have a talk with the governments of the visited countries with the aim of establishing economic-, cultural- and diplomatic relations. The delegation has gone through Hungary four times during its tours.²⁴

The delegation of Yemen paid visit in Poland, Yugoslavia, Rumania, China and the Soviet Union. Surprisingly they had not initiated to establish contact with Hungary, they had not even mentioned the possibility of this during their tour. The reason for this must have been the fact that – thanked to Yemen's membership in the UN – Yemen was informed about the events of 1956 in Hungary and it must have suspected that Hungary's internal situation is not stable enough, so they were not interested in making efforts to get nearer to Hungary.

Hungary may have thought of establishing relations with Yemen when the delegation from Yemen went through Hungary, or perhaps short after that. On 5th June, 1957 a record

²³ The politicians in Syria – like those in Egypt – supported the efforts of the Hungarian foreign politics. According to the opinion of the politicians of Syria, the fact that the Western Powers keep the 'Hungarian Issue' on the agenda, was a distraction to hide their intervention in Algeria and Oman, and their conspiracy against the Arabs. (J. Nagy *ibid.* pp. 127)

²⁴ About the first three journeys through the country there's no detailed official report, it's referred to in some following documents. The 4th visit took place in the morning of 15. January 1958, when a government delegation led by prince al-Badr travelled from Moskow through Hungary. (*Jemeni kormányküldöttség útutazása* 1958. január 14. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-00329/1958).

was made which contained a proposal of the establishment of diplomatic relations through the Hungarian embassy in Cairo.

The diplomatic relations offered numbers of advantages for Hungary. The most important viewpoint for Hungary was the abandonment of the cordon which existed around the Hungarian foreign policy. The competent Hungarian authorities agreed that Yemen would be accepted the diplomatic approach the most willingly among the Arabian countries. This hope was confirmed by the record of the embassies of Damaskus and Cairo.

It was a further deciding viewpoint of the foreign policy that Yemen was the member of the UN. It is needless to emphasise how important it was for Hungary whose issue had been on the agenda of the UN.

The facts that Yemen "has had an anti-imperialist policy for years" and that it "resist the aggression on the British imperialism's side" gave an ideological basis for taking the initiative steps. Additionally the delegation of the USA did not succeeded in making Yemen accept the Eisenhower Doctrine, "because the monarch of Yemen was not willing to accept a common declaration which claims that both countries fight together against the international communism and he was not willing to commit himself to identify with the Eisenhower plan."

It was assured that the Hungarian initiation would not lead to disapproval of the socialist countries, as Yemen had signed numerous contracts or agreements with the majority of the socialist countries by then. Yemen made a friendly agreement with the Soviet Union and had diplomatic relations with China and Czechoslovakia. Besides it had trade agreements with some friendly countries – f.e. with Eastern Germany and Poland – and these socialist countries made steps even in 1957 to establish diplomatic relations with Yemen.

The initiations had not only foreign political reasons. It was not a deciding but a considerable reason that Hungary could widen the number of its commercial partners with the establishment of relations with Yemen, and it could discover further markets for the Hungarian products. Another reason was that the Hungarian experts were aware that Yemen attempted to seek out its natural resources, which was attractive for Hungary in respect of its trade. The fact that Yemen's neighbouring country, Saudi-Arabia, had oil in large quantities, made it quite obvious that Yemen had also some oil, even if not so much as Saudi-Arabia had. The Hungarian Ministry of External Trade may have hoped for it as they planned to participate in seeking out and developing the natural resources.²⁵

The initiation of the establishment of relations with Yemen began on 22nd December, 1957, when the delegation of Yemen went through Hungary for the second time, coming from Poland. Károly Szarka, the deputy Foreign Minister had a long talk about the relations of the two countries with the leader of the delegation, crown prince Mohamed al-Badr. The prince said that the delegation had the aim to establish economic, cultural and diplomatic relations with the mentioned "people's democracies".

²⁵ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Yemennel 1957. június 5.* MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-627.

They established that both countries had common interests, like fighting against the imperialism, preserving the peace. They agreed on the chance of the establishment of further extensive relations between Yemen and Hungary. The prince added to this point that he wanted to build up cultural, economic and political relations with Hungary.

Károly Szarka agreed with the intention of al-Badr and explained that Hungary had the same intentions. He asked how Yemen received a possible Hungarian initiation of the establishment of diplomatic relation. The prince stated there was nothing to stop establishing diplomatic relations, the country was ready to enter negotiation at any time through Hungary's foreign representation, for example in Cairo.²⁶

After the talks of the crown prince and Károly Szarka deputy Foreign Minister the Ministry of Foreign Affairs thought, it was the time Hungary took the first steps to build up the diplomatic relations. according to this it was decided that the issue should come to the Cabinet to be investigated. After the Cabinet had made the decision, Lajos Sziogyártó the ambassador in Cairo had the task to have talk about this issue with the ambassador of Yemen in Cairo.²⁷

Endre Sik, the first deputy of the Foreign Minister made his motion on this issue by the Hungarian Revolutionary Labour Peasant Government on 30th January, 1958.²⁸

According to the decision No. 3044/1958 of 6. February 1958 the Government, led by Ferenc Münnich, assented that the Foreign Minister have talks with the government of the Kingdom of Yemen on the issue of diplomatic relations, and depending on the results of the negotiations he should make a motion by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic to establish diplomatic relations.²⁹

Unexpected complications

On 10th February, 1958 Péter Kós, leader of the 4th Political Department informed Lajos Sziogyártó, the ambassador in Cairo about the decision of the Hungarian Revolutionary Labour Peasant Government. He told that the Foreign Minister would make a motion by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic on the issue of the establishment of the relations, depending on the results of the negotiations.

Lajos Sziogyártó was reminded that being an ambassador in Cairo, he was responsible for having talks with the ambassador of Yemen in Cairo on the given issue. The ambassador was ordered to visit the ambassador of Yemen in Cairo, after he had taken over the decree. He had to refer to the conversation of crown prince Mohamed al-Badr

²⁶ *Jemeni kormánydelegáció útutazása* 1957. december 30. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Admin. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz 156/k.

²⁷ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Jemennel* 1958. január 13. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113.

²⁸ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok felvétele Jemennel (Kormány-előterjesztés)* 1958. január 30. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-00329/1/ szig. titk. saját.

²⁹ *A Magyar Forradalmi Munkás-Paraszt Kormány 3044/1958. sz. határozata a diplomáciai kapcsolatok felvételéről Jemen Királysággal* 1958. február 6. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-00329/2/1958.

and the deputy Foreign Minister and had to emphasise that the Hungarian Government was ready to have talks with the Government of Yemen on the issue of the diplomatic relations.³⁰

On 18th February, 1958 Lajos Sziogyártó reported that it was not expedient to begin talks with Yemen on this issue in the near future, as after the new President of the United Arabian Republic had been elected (21st February) Yemen may abruptly join the Union on federal basis. Following this it would be decided whether Yemen could have own authority on its foreign affairs or it would be represented by the Union's foreign delegates. In case Yemen had the possibility to arrange its foreign affairs after the joining, the ambassador of Yemen assured the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be ready to negotiate.³¹

On 28th April Lajos Sziogyártó visited the Foreign Minister of Egypt, Mr. Favzi. As Yemen had no diplomatic representation in Egypt that time, Sziogyártó asked the Foreign Minister whom and how should the delegates of Hungary consult with about the started conversations with Yemen. The Foreign Minister said the issue was not yet decided. However, he stated that his country preserved its own diplomatic relations with foreign countries. He could not say anything about how to establish new diplomatic relations.³²

Péter Kós ordered Lajos Sziogyártó in his reply that he should get some pieces of information from the responsible quarters about some important issues and then inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about these while Favzi could not give satisfactory

³⁰ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1958. február 10. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-00329/ szig. titk. saját.

³¹ (*Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1958. február 18. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-035/1958 szig. titk. saját.) According to the forecasts of Hungary's ambassador in Cairo on 8. March 1958 Yemen joined the United Arabian Republic, which has been proclaimed on 1. February and has been confirmed on 23. February. Three factors forced the Imam establish the federation: 1, Hadn't he come to an agreement with Egypt, Nasser would have supported the anti-Imam Yemenites in Cairo, the leaders of the organisation 'Free Yemenites', who killed the father of the Imam in 1948 attempting to establish republic in Yemen; 2, The Arabian nationalism had a big response in Yemen. The Imam could hide for a short time that the followers of the Arabian nationalism and Nassers men turn against him; 3, The pressures of England coming from the direction of the Protectorat in Aden were also a reason of the establishment of the confederation with Egypt. The United Arabian States didn't seem to be efficient during its short existence. Finally, the relations between Yemen and the United Arabian Republic became worse and worse, so Ahmed Imam left the United Arabian States on 23. December 1961. Due to this the United Arabian States on broke up on 26. December on Nasser's initiative. About the conflicts between Yemen and Egypt see more: Botzat, R. Közéledés az „öselenséghez”. *Cikkek a Nemzetközi Sajtóból.* 5 (22) 1960. pp. 13; Halliday ibid. pp. 8; Hopkins, H. *Egypt, the crucible.* London, 1969. pp. 426-427; Ingrams ibid. pp. 115-116; MTI ibid. pp. 11; *President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Speeches and Press-Interviews.* Cairo: Information Department. 1961. pp. 347; Schmidt, D. A. *Yemen: The Unknown War.* London, 1968. pp. 45; *Yemen külpolitikája* 1959. Április 8. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-10 79/6 szig. titk./ 1959; Wenner, M. W. *Modern Yemen, 1918-1966.* Baltimor, 1967. pp. 186-187.

³² *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1958. május 1. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-035/2/1958.

answers to the questions concerning the diplomatic relations with Yemen. Sziogyártó had to seek for answers to the following questions:

1./ Is it necessary to conclude an extra agreement with Yemen on the issue of the establishment of diplomatic relations?

2./ Is it necessary to request for an extra agreement for Lajos Sziogyártó for accreditation with Yemen?

3./ Which is the most appropriate place and what are the necessary and the most advantageous forms in the view of the technical arrangements of the establishing of diplomatic relations?

Lajos Sziogyártó reported on 30th June, 1958 that Yemen's joining to the Union was not followed by any kind of practical consequences. Yemen could arrange its foreign affairs like before. As Yemen had its own foreign diplomacy,

1./ The diplomatic relations had to be consulted with Yemen;

2./ It was necessary to ask for an extra agreement for the delegate;

3./ The question connected to the diplomatic relations could be discussed in any of the countries where both states had diplomatic delegation and where the ambassador of Yemen had good relations.

As the question was theoretically decided when the crown prince of Yemen paid a visit, Lajos Sziogyártó thought the establishment of the relations could have been fulfilled by any of the embassies of Hungary.³³

János Radványi, the leader of the 4th Political Department told János Veres, chargé d'affaires in Khartoum on 24th September that he had been charged with negotiating on the issue of the diplomatic relations between Yemen and Hungary in Taiz.

Veres was told to go to Taiz after he had come back to Khartoum he had to visit the protocol head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, explained the aim of his coming and ask for hearing by a crown prince al-Badr, whom he had to talk about the establishment of the diplomatic relations.

The antecedents let one conclude that there was no hinder of the establishment of diplomatic relations on Yemen's side. János Veres was authorised to have talks beside the crown prince with all the statesmen of Yemen, whom he thinks to be important to talk with on this issue; but he had to win the crown prince over to the aim of his mission.

³³ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1958. Június 30. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j I. doboz IV-113-035/3/ 1958.

Veres' scope of duties reached further. After the agreement on the diplomatic relations he had to achieve that Yemen give an agrément for Lajos Sziogyártó, ambassador in Cairo on the spot. Sziogyártó was planned to represent Hungary as an ambassador beside the Imam of Yemen after the conclusion of the agreement.

The chargé d'affaires of Khartoum had to obtain the whole list of names of the government in Taiz and he had to get to know how to address accurately the credentials. He was asked to inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in time about all these. He had the task to build up as wide-ranging relations as possible, first of all with civil servants and he had to send a detailed reports all about his relations concerning each person.

Although the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not aimed to establish a foreign delegation in Taiz, but the chargé d'affaires had to pay attention to the composition of the diplomatic corporation of Yemen, the possibilities of renting a building for the delegation, and he had to study the circumstances of life in Yemen. Without having particular talks, he had to form a notion of the possibilities of Hungary concerning the foreign trade with Yemen.

As some socialist countries had diplomatic delegations in Taiz and their former experiences could come in handy for Hungary furthermore, they could help Veres to carry out his task, Veres was told to try to get in touch with them. This should be one of his first arrangements after he gets there.³⁴

János Veres visited Kirpicsenko, the soviet chargé d'affaires in the embassy of the Soviet Union while he stayed in Cairo, who accompanied the ambassador of the Soviet Union to Yemen at that time to hand over his credentials. Kirpicsenko told them about curiosities of the Yemenites and calmed Veres down as he worried about the postponing of his entrance to the country. Kirpicsenko said it was not a single example and the lingering on Yemen's side is not an unfriendly way of behaving only against Hungary.

Kirpicsenko advised Veres to visit Hassan Ibrahim, the delegate of the Imam in Cairo to solve the problem, he did so. Hassan Ibrahim welcomed friendly the Hungarian delegate and promised to do his best to promote his way to Yemen. They agreed that the tour would be arranged with the help of the chargé d'affaires of Yemen in Kahrtoom, and he himself – having a permanent contact with the Imam – would support this.

Veres contacted with the chargé d'affaires of Yemen in Khartoum and informed him about his conversation with the representative of Yemen. The chargé d'affaires set about the administration with great enthusiasm. As there has been no reply for three weeks form Taiz, he told the same about the curiosities of the Yemenites as Kirpicsenko.

The chargé d'affairs visited Veres on 21st October and reported that he got a letter from prince al-Badr. He wrote he would welcome him with pleasure after he came back to the capital from his tour from the country.

On 6th November János Veres visited the ambassador of Egypt and he refered to the dragging on of the tour to Yemen. The ambassador did not found it strange that it lasted so

³⁴ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1958. szeptember 24. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-0329/7/ szig. titk.

long. He added that it would be reasonable to send a letter to the Imam himself and call on him for a visit at first, as he was very distrustful against everyone.³⁵

On 17th February prince Hassan Ibrahim, delegate of the Kingdom of Yemen in Cairo received Lajos Sziogyártó, ambassador of Hungary. After the usual formalities Sziogyártó came on the point. He said that after the talks with the crown prince in Budapest, the negotiations on the issue of the establishment of diplomatic relations began between him and the predecessor of Hassan Ibrahim. After the ceasing of the embassy the negotiations broke down, and Hungary did not know how and whom to contact with. The Hungarian Foreign Minister charged János Veres, the chargé d'affaires on Khartoum to travel to Yemen and continue the interrupted negotiations. Both in Khartoum and in Cairo entrance permissions were asked for Veres, but Yemen had not given any announcement concerning the issue of a visa so far.

Hassan Ibrahim said he knew about the matter and Hungarians delegate in Khartoum told him about Veres' tour. He – Hassan Ibrahim – was informed by the cabinet boss that it was not reasonable for Hungary's chargé d'affaires to go there at the moment, as the king was sick and no one was allowed to negotiate with delegates from abroad without him. This was why Veres hadn't got any entrance visa. Ibrahim added that the king knew about the former negotiations between Hungary and Yemen and he was not against the relations. It was only his sickness which hinders him to deal with the issue. He promised that he would do his best to promote the negotiations, after he was informed that the king was on the way of recovery.

Finally they agreed that he urgently would turn to the king and ask him to let arrange the formalities, either he should be charged by the king with negotiating with the ambassador of Hungary in Cairo or Veres should be asked to go to Yemen. He promised that he would inform the embassy about the reply as soon as possible.

Having no options Sziogyártó had to accept this proposal and asked the delegate of Yemen in Cairo to promote the quick arrangement of the issue by means of his personal influence. He promised this willingly.³⁶

Parallel to the postponing of Veres's tour in Yemen, István Sebes, deputy Foreign Minister suggested on his motion of 11th October, 1958 that the Presidential Council should permit the establishment of relations between the People's Republic of Hungary and the Kingdom of Yemen on the basis of the decree No. 3044/1958 of the Hungarian Revolutionary Labour Peasant Government. The Presidential Council approved it in its decree No. 112/1958 on 14th November, 1958 and decided to establish diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Yemen.³⁷

³⁵ *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok felvétele Jemennel* 1958. november 11. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-132/sz. tük. 1958.

³⁶ *Beszélgetés Hasszán Ibrahimmal, a Yemeni Királyság kairói képviselőjével* 1959. február 18. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-83/szig. tük. 1959.

³⁷ *Az ET 112/1958. sz. határozata Diplomáciai kapcsolatok felvételéről Jemennel* 1958. november 14. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-113-00329/ 1958.

Establishment of diplomatic relations

János Veres arrived in Taiz on 3rd March, 1959 to establish diplomatic relations between Yemen and Hungary. On 4th March he was received by Onadi Mohamed al-Amri, Minister of State and deputy Foreign Minister. In the absence of the crown prince al-Amri was responsible to deal with all the affairs of state. Veres told him about the reason of his visit in Yemen and reported that he bought a letter from the Hungarian Foreign Minister. Al-Amri had been very cordial and said that Hungary's chargé d'affaires in Khartoum would be the Imam's guest during his stay in Yemen and he would have the possibility to get to know the country. The Minister of State had not made any declaration concerning the diplomatic relations on the first negotiation. He advised Veres to go to Sanaa on 6th March, after his coming back they would continue the negotiations.

Veres took the opportunity to get in touch with officials of Yemen in Sanaa, Taiz and Hodeida, according to the former order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The visited ministers were cordial and expressed their hope that the relations between Yemen and Hungary would become wider and wider.³⁸

After visiting Sanaa and Hodeida, Veres saw the Minister of State on 11th March again. During his absence al-Amri got an approval from the Imam concerning the continuation of the negotiation, so the second talk was more cordial. He said that they would hand over their conversation planning to Veres, in which it was about the strengthening of the friendship and co-operation between Yemen and Hungary. Furthermore, they talked about Veres's experiences during his tour and they parted from each other, agreeing that Veres would receive the plans of Yemen on the 11th of the month.

Hungary's delegate received it on the 12th at night from the protocol boss. Veres could not sign or initial the plan for lack of authorisation, which he tried to explain to the

³⁸ The visited ministers were: Kadi Abdurrahman as-Sayagi, Minister of Finance; Kadi Mohamed al-Amri, Minister of Agriculture; Sayyid Ali ibn Ibrahim, deputy Minister of War, and Saif al-Islam Ali ibn Yahya, Minister of Education. Beside the ministers Veres managed to get acquainted with Sayyid Ali Zabaa, the royal governor of the city and province, Sanaa and with royal Kadi Ibrahim al-Hadrani, the leader of the local office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sanaa, who had the task to have connections with experts and diplomats from abroad. Hungary's chargé d'affaires in Karthoum visited in Taizz Sayyid Ahmed Zabara, the supreme judge and Kadi Abdullah al-Mudjahid, the governor of Taizz. On occasion of a dinner, which has been arranged in honour of the ambassador of Sudan in Djidda, the ambassador of the USA in Cairo and Hungary's chargé d'affaires in Karthoum, Veres met Sayyid Hamed al-Visali, the royal governor of Taizz, with Kadi Abdallah Savkami, the secretary of the royal council, with Kadi Abdallah al-Hadjiri, the Minister of Transport and with prince Hassan ibn Ali. Veres met and negotiated during the establishment of diplomatic relations with some of the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which resided in Taizz: with the director, Ali Radzsaa, with the head of protocol, Sayyid Abdallah Sarafi and with the secretary, Ahmed Mufarrah. Hungary's delegate made a formal call in Hodeida by Sayyid Mohamed Ahmed, The royal governor and by Hassem Taleb, the official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (*Beszélgetések Jemenben* 1959. Április 8. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-146-79/4/szig. titk. 1959.)

protocol boss. The Imam seemed to have ordered his delegates to make the Hungarian party initial the plan, as the protocol boss kept his ground and brought another plan that night, which contained particular prescriptions concerning the legal protection of the citizens of one country in the other country and vice versa; this second plan put the friendship between the two countries in the background.

Following this Veres said to the protocol boss that he was unwilling to initial the first plan because the Hungarian party had not prepared for this and he had not been given any authorisation to initial a document. To dissipate the suspicion of the Yemenites he added that he was sure that Hungary would be ready to sign the agreement of friendship and co-operation.³⁹

They had to discuss the "phase shift" between the declaration of the diplomatic relations and the handing over the credentials. The protocol boss thought that the diplomatic relations were established after the handing over of the credentials and the setting up of the embassy. They parted from each other, agreeing that another meeting would be organised on the evening of 13th by al-Amri, the Minister of State.

It was not necessary to discuss the issues again on the 13th as al-Amri asked Hungary's representative to draft a statement-plan, which he would show the Imam and which would be signed. Following this Veres asked for an agrément for Lajos Szijgyártó and handed over the relevant reminder.

Al-Amri had shown Veres a statement-plan in Arabic on the 15th and he said he would send it to the Imam in this form. Because of the long processes of the approval on the Imam's side the arrangements got on very slowly. It was not sure that the Hungarian party could go home on 17th March from Taiz. When Veres mentioned al-Amri his intention to go home, he was surprised that the Hungarian wanted to go home, but he did his best to make the Imam approve all the documents by the evening of 16th.

On 16th at 1 o'clock at the night al-Amri arrived with a prince in the house of Veres from the king's palace. Al-Amri regretted to inform him that the Imam could not receive the Hungarian negotiating delegation because of his sickness, but he charged the Minister of State that he should transmit his cordial greetings to the President of the Presidential Council and the Hungarian Government. Before the signing of the statement al-Amri, the Minister of State announced it orally that the Imam did not object to the accreditation of the Hungarian ambassador on Yemen's side. He said that they would ask Hungary for an agrément for one of their ambassador in Europe. The Minister of State set the date of the handing over of the credentials on the end of May or beginning of June.

The Minister of State transmitted the Imam's wish that the agreement of friendship and co-operation between Yemen and Hungary should be signed in Taiz at the same time when the credentials were handed over.

³⁹ It was obvious that the Yemenites stuck to their practices, lacking in wider experiences. Yemen established diplomatic relations with the socialist countries in a special way: the crown prince signed the agreement of friendship and co-operation with the visited socialist countries, which contained the possibility of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the given country and Yemen. Yemen wanted to sign such an agreement with Hungary, too.

Al-Amri told him about his visit in Hungary, the cordial reception there and following this they signed the statement.⁴⁰

On 12th March, 1959 a letter was sent to the secretary of the Council of Ministers. It contained that the decision of the Presidential Council No. 4/1959 should be published in the Magyar Közlöny on 21st March or in its next issue: „*The Presidential Council of People's Republic of Hungary decided to establish diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Yemen.*”⁴¹

Handing over of the credentials

On 8th May, 1958 Lajos Sziogyártó gave an account in his report that in spite of Yemen's joining to the United Arab Republic the former diplomatic representations remained and Yemen's foreign representations functioned like before additionally some new representations were established in further countries.

Zoltán Széphelyi, deputy leader of the Ministry's of Foreign Affairs 4th Political Department informed Lajos Sziogyártó on 8th May, 1959 that according to the reports of János Veres the Ministry took the necessary steps to appoint him an ambassador in Taiz. According to this the credentials of the Hungarian ambassador were sent and the Hungarian and English version of the speech which should be made on occasion of the handing over of the credentials.⁴²

Reading the report-copies of János Veres it turned out for the Hungarian foreign politics that the Government of Yemen expects the conclusion of the agreement of friendship and co-operation between the two countries as a stipulation of the establishment of diplomatic relations. As according to the expectations the agreement should have been signed on Sziogyártó's visit in Yemen, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took a motion to the Council of Ministers to authorise the Hungarian negotiating ambassador in Yemen to have talk on the issue of the agreement and to sign it. According to the expectations the plan of the agreement of friendship and co-operation and the credentials should have been sent by July, after the Council of Ministers had made the relevant decisions. Because of this Hungary's ambassador in Cairo was ordered not to go to Yemen until the message arrives in June; then they will come back to that again.

It was told that Sziogyártó would be accompanied by János Veres on his way to Yemen, as the ambassador could make use of Veres's former experiences and his contacts.

As the Yemen party requested on occasion of Veres' visit in March that it would hand over the credentials of the Hungarian party at the end of May or at the beginning of June,

⁴⁰ *Tárgyalások Jemenben* 1959. Április 6. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-116-56/1/. szig. titk. 1959.

⁴¹ *Tárgyalások Jemenben* 1959. március 19. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-116-00329/10/ 1959.

⁴² *Diplomáciai kapcsolatok felvétele Jemennel* 1959. április 24. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-116-001764/ 1959.

Lajos Sziogyártó visited Hassan Ibrahim, the Imam's representative in Cairo, who said that the Imam's absence would not hinder to hand it over, because crown prince al-Badr would take the credentials over as a regent.

On 11th May Sziogyártó went to Khartoum to continue his journey to Yemen accompanied by Veres, as it had been ordered. He could depart from Khartoum to Asmara only on 20th May. They had to stay there for two days because of Veres' sickness. They arrived on 22nd May in Taiz, the capital of Yemen of that time.

Arriving in Taiz it turned out that the whole government was absent. The majority of the leaders went to Rome according to the direction of the Imam. Some of them accompanied crown prince al-Badr on his tour in the country. No one stayed in Yemen, whom Veres consulted with in March. They learnt soon that military riots broke out one after the other in the different regions of the country.⁴³

Under these circumstances did the Hungarian delegation stay in Taiz for three weeks waiting for the decision of the crown prince whether they should go to Sanaa or he will come to Taiz. After three weeks Sziogyártó sent a telegram to the crown prince requesting him to receive them in Sanaa. The crown prince replied on 8th June that they should go to Sanaa with the following plane.

The crown prince received Lajos Sziogyártó in Sanaa on the 12th with all due ceremony. Sziogyártó handed over the credentials to the crown prince after a short speech. Then they had a talk of 45 minutes during which the crown prince al-Badr said he saw it clearly that Yemen was a cultural and economic underdeveloped country. It was obvious for him that Yemen could not change the situations without help of other countries. Yemen could only count on the helping hand of socialist countries. Al-Badr expressed his hope that Hungary could also help Yemen. Sziogyártó offered the crown prince to send a limited number of students – literally five students – to Budapest for the school year 1960/1961. Al-Badr answered it was a great help for them.⁴⁴

In the morning of the day when the credentials were handed over, the director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the crown prince had decided that the signing of the agreement of friendship should be postponed.⁴⁵

⁴³ About the riots of the army in Sanaa and Taizz and their consequences see more: *Diplomáciai Kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1959. Július 25. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-116-186/szig. titk.-1959.

⁴⁴ *Beszélgetés Badr yemeni trónörökösével* 1959. Július 25. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-14-188/szig. titk.-1959.

⁴⁵ According to the assumption of the ambassador of Cairo the crown prince didn't want to sign the agreement instead of the Minister of State, which has been compiled by the king's surroundings, and about which he didn't know until it was handed over without consulting the Imam (*Diplomáciai Kapcsolatok Yemennel* 1959. Július 25. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-116-186/szig. titk.-1959.)

Epilogue

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the embassy in Cairo on 10th October about the reception of the scholarship students of Yemen, they announced that the Ministry of Education began to size up the conditions of the reception scholarship students.⁴⁶ On 10th November, 1959 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the conditions of the Ministry of Education concerning the reception of the students. They asked the ambassador, Sziogyártó to inform the competent organs of Yemen about this.⁴⁷

On 15th March the deputy Foreign Minister of Yemen, Abdel Rahman Abu Taleb visited Lajos Sziogyártó in his embassy. This issue of the scholarship students was brought up, talking about the assistance of the economic undeveloped countries. The deputy Foreign Minister of Yemen said that the Soviet Union, The People's Republic of China and Czechoslovakia had received numerous students from Yemen and he kept pressing for the enlargement of the number of the scholarship students. Sziogyártó mentioned that Hungary offered five scholarship, but he was unaware whether it was made use of. Abu Taleb was surprised that he did not know about this. He expressed his wish that we should preserve these places for Yemen. He suggested that Hungary should let them send ten scholarship students in September, 1959 or when the teaching of the Hungarian language begins. These students could begin their studies at a Hungarian University in 1961, after they had acquired the Hungarian language. The majority had studied agriculture, only one or two student had pursued industrial studies.⁴⁸

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced on 22nd March 1960 in its letter addressed to the Ministry of Education that the delegate of Yemen's Government turned to the Hungarian ambassador in Cairo again on the issue of the scholarship students of Yemen. They requested that we should receive 10 scholarship students from Yemen for the school year of 1960/1961, who could study in Hungary in 1961/1962 after having allowed the usual one-year language course. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported this request.⁴⁹

On 14th April, 1960 ambassador Sziogyártó was informed that the competent Hungarian authorities were ready to receive the ten scholarship students from Yemen. The conditions were the following:

a./ The date of their arrival is 1st September 1960.

⁴⁶ *Beszélgetés Badr Yemeni trónörökösrel* 1959. Október 10. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-14-005114/szig. titk. - 1959.

⁴⁷ According to this, Hungary could have received the five scholarship students in 1959, if they had arrived by 1. January 1960 at the latest. Otherwise they couldn't be received until the next school year, because according to the Ministry of Public Education the time hasn't been enough for the students to master the Hungarian language by September 1960, when the school year at university begins. (*Ösztöndíjasok fogadása Yemenből* 1959. November 12. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-14-005114/1/szig. titk. - 1959.)

⁴⁸ *Yemeni Külügyminiszter - Helyettes kérése* 1960. március 16. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-533-90/szig. titk. - 1960.

⁴⁹ *Ösztöndíjasok Fogadása Yemenből* 1960. Március 22. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-722.3.

b./ In the first year they have to take part in a language course and they could start their studies in the school year 1961/1962.

c./ Their scholarship is 850 HUF for one month, out of which 50 HUF should be paid monthly for the students hostel (room, lightning, heating, washing); the canteen costs 238 HUF a month (meal three times a day). They do not have to pay school fees and receive medical treatment and hospital care gratis.

d./ The government have not met to costs of their travel here.

Szijgyártó informed the Imam's delegate in Cairo about the offering of the ten places, who thanked for this noble act. The Yemenites wanted to send five students to the Faculty of Agriculture, to the Faculty of Medicine and to the Faculty of Geology.

On 26th May the Imam's delegate in Cairo announced in his note that his government accepted the offered ten places and they would announce the list of the students and the majors at the beginning of August.⁵⁰

The relations between Yemen and Hungary had no significant results apart from the scholarship students of Yemen in Hungary. It was a success on the diplomatic side and a failure on the economic side. Hungary's commercial relations with Yemen stayed on a low level. It restricted on selling of medicines in the value of a few thousand HUF and a few Hungarian products which reached Yemen through Aden. The heads of state got rarely in touch with each other by sending greeting cards on occasion of celebrations.

The revolution of September, 1962 and the liquidation of the monarchy contributed to the developing of the relations. Hungary acknowledged the republican government which was set up after the revolution on 3rd October, 1962. On 28th February, 1963 the diplomatic relations grew into ambassadorship. The civil war in the country caused lacks. Hungary could compensate these after having acknowledged the Republic. The former superficial relations were deepen in 1963 when Hungary sent medicament assistance which was one million HUF. The culmination of the relations between the two countries wolvles the negotiations in Budapest between 26th and 31st May, 1964, when the first treaties, the agreement of friendship, a trade agreement, credit pact and aid programmes, agreement of cultural and scientific co-operation were signed. This point can be regarded as the beginning of the co-operation in practice between Hungary and Yemen. The introduction and itemisation of this process could be the topic of a new study.

⁵⁰ *Ösztöndíjasok fogadása Yemenből* 1960. Június 9. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-722.3.-131/szig.titk.-1960; *Ösztöndíjasok fogadása Yemenből* 1960. június 25. MOL Küm. Jemen 1945-64. Tük. XIX-J-1-j 1. doboz IV-722.3.-002833/2/szig. titk.-1960.