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Special Analysis

YEMENS:

Unity Remains To Be Achieved

The announcement yesterday by the governments of North and South Yemen that they have merged to form the Republic of Yemen begins a 30-month transition period during which the new government will try to finalize integration and overcome tribal, religious, and political resistance to unity. The exchange of security troops on Sunday was intended to signify the commitment of Aden and Sanaa to more than a cosmetic union.

North Yemen's Consultative Council and South Yemen's Supreme People's Council jointly ratified the unity agreement yesterday, and the executive committees of the two councils elected a ruling five-member Presidential Council. North Yemeni President Salih will chair that council, which will negotiate details of the new government. The new regime will postpone a referendum on unity until the transition period ends.

Salih and South Yemeni Secretary Bid, who are committed to unity, have been pressing for an early announcement to improve their respective political standings and undercut opponents to the merger.

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