



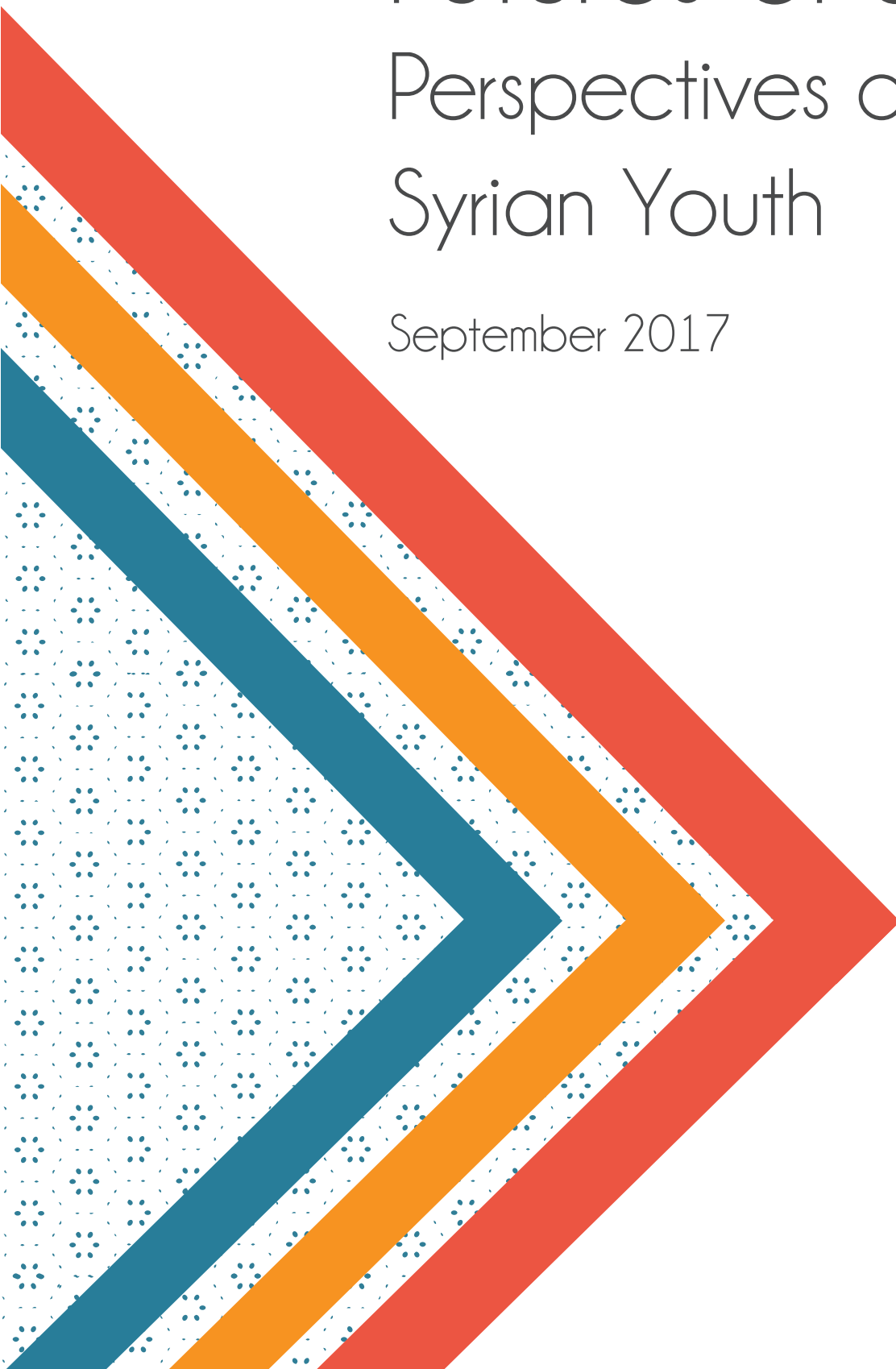
YOUTH PEACE INITIATIVE

THE HAGUE • THE NETHERLANDS

Futures of Syria

Perspectives of Syrian Youth

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Futures of Syria

We, the youth of Syria, have come to The Hague to confer the situation of our home country.

Since early 2011, widespread violence during the conflict in Syria has displaced nearly half of the Syrian population. The conflict is entering another year, without any progress leading towards a peaceful agreement.

While remembering the past and acknowledging the present challenges, we wish to think about the different possible futures for Syria. Together, with our shared belief to unite for a sustainable solution, we will work with any means available to achieve a better future for our homeland and develop the role that we can play as young members of the Syrian diaspora.

After challenging but productive discussions we are proud to present to you the fruits of our labour.



Conference 2017

In order to envision different futures that could be in store for Syria, we have come together with a group of Syrians at the Futures of Syria conference from September 18 to 22, 2017. Organised by the Syria Committee of the Youth Peace Initiative, we used these five days to define our role as a young diaspora.

We started the week with learning from examples of countries in post-conflict situations transitioning towards democracy. What do these transitions look like? And under what conditions can they take place?

Later on we discussed the roles that different diaspora play in influencing the situation in their home country as well as their host country. How are diaspora organised? Why are diaspora often divided and how can we improve trust among ourselves?

We discussed the current situation of the Syrian conflict in detail to lay the groundwork for envisioning possible future scenarios. Who are the main actors and what are the driving forces behind the conflict nowadays?

This led to two full days of imagining, discussing, and writing future scenarios for Syria. Which scenarios can we imagine that are realistic while accepting certain uncertainties that characterise the current conflict? And taking these possible scenarios into account, what are concrete actions that young Syrians could undertake to prepare for the future and possibly even improve it?

We imagined four different scenarios for the future of Syria and agreed on different realistic courses of action to be undertaken by ourselves within these scenarios.

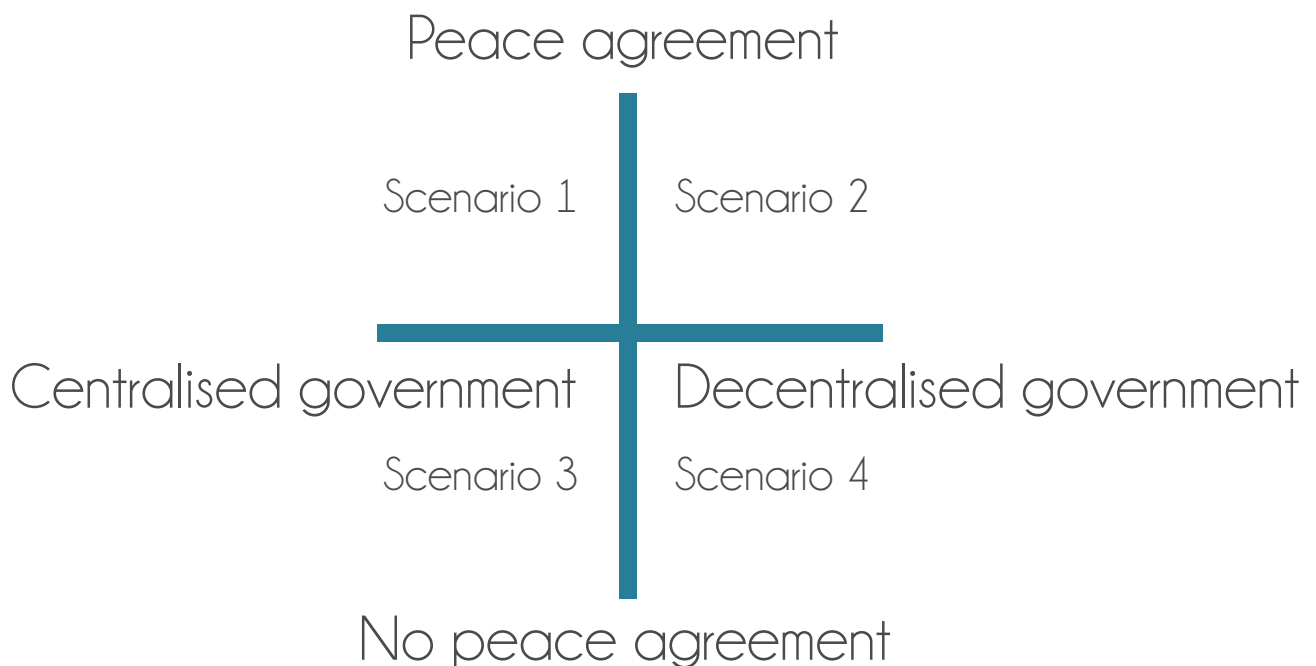
We have used the method of scenario building to ensure that the actions we undertake are relevant and attainable within different possible future scenarios.

Scenarios

Hereby we envisioned Syria in the year of 2020. Through identifying several elements influencing the conflict, of which some are more uncertain and others are more fixed, we created scenarios that describe different possible futures that are realistic given the current context. A shortlist of elements that we took into account can be found below:

- The involvement of Turkey
- The position of ISIS
- State of democracy
- Returning refugees
- New refugees or IDPs
- The role of civil society
- The level of violence
- The involvement of the US and the EU
- The involvement of Russia
- Reconstruction of Syria
- State of security
- State of the economy

Two key uncertainties were chosen to create the following axes, on which our four scenarios are based on:



Action Plans

Following these four scenarios, we have assessed which concrete actions taken by ourselves can realistically be achieved in most of the above scenarios, in order to ensure they are relevant and attainable within different situations.

We prioritised these actions by articulating our main goals as a group, from which the following more specific actions follow.

Goal 1: Strengthen the voice of Syrian youth – organise, unite and connect

Action: Create a (n) (online) platform in order to

- Connect Syrian youth diaspora;
- Improve information sharing and awareness amongst Syrian youth;
- Form a bridge between other networks of groups or individuals;
- Advocate the vision of Syrian youth;
- Influence Dutch perception of Syria through media outlets.

Goal 2: Build capacity of Syrian youth

Action: Facilitate gatherings and trainings to build capacity, knowledge, and skills

- Provide training to Syrian youth in: political activism, dialogue and negotiation skills, advocacy, technology, presentation, diaspora organisation, development, post-conflict transition, and fundraising;
- Expand network in host countries to facilitate and provide such trainings and take part in courses.

Goal 3: Provide support in and around Syria

Action: Set up and/or support job creating projects in and around Syria

- Facilitate (online) training on how to create a start-up or project, related to the reconstruction of Syria;
- Connect Syrians with experts in host countries such as the Netherlands on subjects that are relevant for the reconstruction of Syria, e.g. water management or solar systems;
- Connect foreign investors with reconstruction projects inside Syria;
- Connect to small organisations to partner up and identify needs.

