

## Connecting the Dots Working Group Workshop

Stockholm, November 29, 2015, 9:00-12:15.

Location to be announced to those who register!

Email: [connectingthedots@riseup.net](mailto:connectingthedots@riseup.net)

*Connecting the Dots (CTD) är ett nytt Stockholmsbaserat gräsrotinitiativ och en arbetsgrupp med syfte att fungera som tanke- och informationsmedjare, organisatör och initiativtagare. Vi vill bjuda in er till en workshop. Våra medlemmar är aktiva inom den breda vänstern och inom gröna, feministiska, antimilitaristiska och antirasistiska rörelser som aktivister, akademiker, konstnärer och organisatörer. Vår utgångspunkt är att koppla ihop problem och utmaningar inom områden så som militarism, miljöfrågor, migration, rasism, sexism och strukturella ojämlikheter av ekonomi och makt. Vår ambition är att kartlägga varje områdes historia för att kunna belysa de bakomliggande orsakerna till problemen och därmed synliggöra långsiktiga lösningar. Vi avser att "connect the dots" mellan olika problem med målet att utveckla förslag på konkreta (re)konstruktioner av alternativ och även länka samman relevanta rörelser, grupper och personer.*

### Background Essay by Jonathan M. Feldman

#### An Introduction to the Workshop

The goal of the Connect the Dots Working Group is to promote a discussion and solutions related to a host of problems now confronting Sweden in matters related to social inclusion, foreign policy and the need to create a sustainable and democratic economy. By "Connecting the Dots" we mean a system that allows us to not only connect different kinds of issues, but also connect to the processes that allow us to comprehensively address different problems. Sweden currently faces significant challenges in three key areas: (a) the need for improved ethnic integration related to systematic ethnic exclusion and the new challenges related to a growing number of refugees; (b) a growing conflict with Russia and militarized foreign policy leading to arms exports, a buildup up in military budgets and push to NATO; and (c) ongoing challenges to address problems in energy supply, ecological sustainability and full employment linked to quality jobs.

Not only are comprehensive solutions rarely advanced to address these problems, but they are also addressed "serially," i.e. as separate issues. In contrast, addressing anyone of these key problems becomes exceedingly difficult without showing their linkages. For example, problem (a) requires new resources, but many resources are devoted to (b) a military economy and arms exports, such exports go to conflict zones that potentially generate refugees. Problem (b) is focused on external threats, yet a distorted view of the Russian Federation's intentions has put less emphasis on (c) significant environmental threats. Resources devoted to (b) military budgets and technology, comes at the potential expense of (c) mass transit and alternative energy investments necessary for addressing the employment and ecological crises. The refugee crisis

(a) is based on wars and climate change, yet (b) arms exports contribute to refugees and (c) underinvestment in a green economy worsens climate change. These general problems (a), (b) and (c) are like the “dots” which we must connect. Connecting the dots is a kind of *horizontal integration*, i.e. a way to link up issues.

In contrast, the media and politicians are often separating these issues. Therefore, we must put pressure on the media and politicians. Two ways to do this are first to critically analyze and pressure the media and second to mobilize large numbers of persons in a public demonstration of support for both comprehensive policies and “connecting the dots.” The aim of our workshop will be to explain this general problematic and address various solutions to it. We will do this by providing a set of general ideas about the problems and potential solutions and involve the attendees of the workshop to help us design the plans necessary for the solutions. We are focused on four separate action areas related to politics, media and culture which are explained below. The conference is not simply an “academic discussion session,” but an action planning meeting design to plot action scenarios which the group attached to the workshop will carry out in the future.

Our general approach is that we need to develop new kinds of political interventions which can help address both comprehensive policies internal to each thematic area as well as help connect these policies. Our primary focus will be on four key kinds of interventions. These include: a) creating a media accountability organization and network; b) using the internet and other media to promote mass mobilizations of local citizens which involve local face-to-face meetings as well as an interactive media component; c) study-action circles which provide research on solutions and help organize directed actions; and d) various artistic interventions which can link political meetings and various spaces in the radio, museums, galleries, the universities and other spaces.

*Vertical integration* is the system that can be used to link critical thinkers, persons in face-to-face deliberations, the Internet and the mass media. We need to build new electronic platforms that link different kinds of ideas, persons, and spaces.

The meeting held on 29 November 2015 will introduce our ideas to participants and structure the work for the coming months after reviewing basic ideas.

### **ANMÄLNINGSFORMULÄR/REGISTRATION FORM**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/14KJ6L9AU2GIOqG4qvNDLuHpk4uyHhNZ-OQM0FNK6Py4/viewform>

*Anmäl varje person som vill delta!*

*You must register to participate!*