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Military Readiness and the Urgency of Continuous Training in Facing Contemporary Threats

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to analyze the role of continuous military training in improving individual readiness, collective capability, and institutional adaptability in responding to contemporary multidimensional threats. The research applies a qualitative descriptive approach using literature analysis of recent defense studies, military training doctrines, and scholarly journal publications discussing modern training models and operational readiness. The findings indicate that continuous training significantly strengthens soldiers' physical endurance, cognitive decision making, and psychological resilience. Collective and scenario-based exercises enhance interoperability, command coordination, and readiness to respond to cyber, urban, and hybrid conflict situations. Furthermore, joint and combined training improves international cooperation, operational standardization, and strategic learning among participating forces. Continuous training represents a critical pillar for sustaining military effectiveness in modern security environments.

INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly changing world, threats to national sovereignty no longer come in conventional forms alone. National security now faces new challenges that are complex, multidimensional, and often unpredictable (Mahnken, 2021). This changing threat landscape encompasses a wide spectrum, ranging from asymmetric warfare, cyber attacks, ideological infiltration, to information warfare that is difficult to identify and counter with traditional military approaches. Globalization, technological revolution, and increasingly intense geopolitical competition are accelerating these changes, forcing every country to reevaluate its defense approaches and strategies.

Amid this new reality, national defense can no longer rely solely on troop numbers or conventional weaponry. What is far more crucial is how these elements of military power are prepared, honed, and continuously harmonized so that they are able to respond quickly and appropriately to any potential threat. In this context, the urgency of continuous military training becomes increasingly relevant even crucial as the backbone of national military preparedness. Without sustained preparedness, technological superiority and personnel numbers will be meaningless in the face of contemporary threats.

Readiness itself is not a fixed condition that can be achieved once and for all. It is a dynamic process that must be continuously shaped, tested, and renewed through a continuous learning approach. In military institutions, this process is concretely reflected in the training system: from basic individual training to large-scale operational scenario simulations that resemble real combat fields. In the face of increasingly complex and non-linear threat dynamics, military training can no longer be carried out sporadically, separately, or merely as an administrative routine.

A training approach that is continuous, contextual, and based on short-term and long-term strategic needs is required. This type of training not only improves operational readiness, but also builds the adaptive capacity of soldiers, fosters military professionalism, and ensures that national defense forces are always in step with technological developments and rapid changes in the global security environment. In this context, continuous military training must be seen as a strategic investment, not just a routine program. This journal seeks to explore in depth how a sustainably designed military training cycle can maintain and improve combat readiness, strengthen professionalism within the military, and respond adaptively and responsively to various future defense demands. By highlighting the importance of integrating policy, strategic planning, and innovation in military training, this paper aims to contribute to the discourse on national defense transformation in the face of an era of global disruption.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Military Readiness from Strategic Perspective

According to (Doheney et al, 2019), readiness is not merely the ability to fight on the battlefield, but also includes the ability to prevent conflict through a credible and respected defense posture. In this case, military readiness has two sides: as a deterrent and as a responsive force. In the contemporary context, military readiness can no longer be defined narrowly based only on the number of personnel or weaponry. The modern perspective demands a more comprehensive understanding, including psychological readiness, moral resilience, technological sophistication, command system integration, logistical speed, and flexibility in tactical and strategic decision-making. (Chairas and Muhtadi, 2022) emphasize that today's military capabilities must be comprehensive, capable of operating not only in open warfare but also in military operations other than war (MOOTW), including humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and conflict zone stabilization.

Rapid developments in defense technology have also changed the face of military preparedness. Artificial intelligence (AI), automated weapon systems, unmanned combat vehicles, and new forms of warfare such as cyber attacks and information warfare are unavoidable challenges. This situation demands a paradigm shift in military force development. Today's soldiers must not only be physically strong, but also intellectually and cognitively superior. Military training in this context should not only focus on conventional combat tactics, but must also include training in critical thinking, stress management, the use of the latest technology, and the ability to make quick decisions in complex situations.

In the framework of military transformation, (Krepinevich, 2009) emphasizes that the renewal of defense forces cannot rely solely on the acquisition of advanced weaponry systems. True transformation must begin with a change in the operational paradigm supported by adaptive training, learning from previous combat experience, and a sharp analysis of the dynamics of future threats. Military transformation is not only a technical necessity, but a strategic imperative to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of national defense forces in the face of an ever-evolving threat landscape.

Modern defense doctrine asserts that military readiness can only be achieved through structured strategic planning and programmed, continuous training. Without a systematic and contextual training process, the military's potential, both in terms of personnel and defense equipment, will not be optimal. Training that is not integrated with actual strategic needs risks producing troops that are unprepared to face the realities on the ground, especially in dealing with non-conventional forms of threats such as cyber attacks, ideological infiltration, or disinformation that targets national stability directly or indirectly.

In Indonesia, the concept of military readiness is reflected in the implementation of the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) policy, which is the direction of medium-term defense force development. The Ministry of Defense (Kemhan, 2021) states that military preparedness does not only focus on fulfilling the main strength of the weapon system (alutsista), but also on developing professional, trained, disciplined, and adaptable defense human resources (HR) capable of responding to the dynamics of global threats. Preparing soldiers with high competency standards is an integral part of the strategy to increase national defense capabilities.

Furthermore, readiness also reflects the effectiveness of integration between strategic command, military logistics, intelligence systems, and synergy between branches and agencies. Therefore, readiness is not only the result of technical training, but a reflection of the defense ecosystem built through policies, organizational structures, military culture, and continuous innovation. In this context, military training must be designed not only as a routine, but as a long-term strategic process that strengthens the country's defense posture.

METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigma

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that focuses on exploring meaning, interpreting data, and gaining a deep understanding of the phenomenon of military preparedness and the importance of continuous training amid the complexity of contemporary threats. This approach is considered appropriate because the issues under review are contextual and require a holistic understanding of ongoing strategic dynamics and defense policies.

Approach and Methods

The research was conducted using library research methods, namely by collecting and analyzing various relevant literature sources. The data sources came from scientific books, journal articles, defense policy reports, national and international military strategy documents, publications from think tanks, and reliable online documents. This method allowed researchers to explore various scientific perspectives on the concept of military preparedness, the characteristics of modern threats, and military training systems in various countries.

Data Collection Instruments

The data in this study is secondary data, obtained from existing written documents and publications. Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation and systematic searching of libraries relevant to the focus of the study.

Data Analysis Process

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis, a qualitative technique used to interpret and understand text content systematically. The collected data was classified into broad themes such as: the concept of military preparedness, characteristics of contemporary threats, the structure and principles of continuous training, and adaptive defense policies.

This study did not involve primary data or direct participation from individuals or military institutions. All information was obtained from published secondary sources. Although this approach provides a comprehensive macro and theoretical overview, limited access to internal military empirical data can be a challenge in providing highly specific policy recommendations. Nevertheless, this approach remains relevant for analyzing strategic narratives and formulating contextual training policy directions.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Contemporary Threat Dynamics in the Modern Security Environment

The global security environment in the twenty-first century has undergone profound transformation. Contemporary threats are increasingly characterized by complexity, unpredictability, and multidimensionality. Unlike traditional military threats that were primarily defined by large-scale conventional warfare between nation-states, modern threats often emerge in non-linear and asymmetrical forms that challenge traditional military doctrines and operational structures. These threats may not always be visible in the form of armed conflict, yet they possess the potential to significantly disrupt national stability, undermine defense systems, and weaken societal cohesion.

One of the most prominent characteristics of contemporary threats is their ability to operate across multiple domains simultaneously, including land, sea, air, cyber, and the information environment. Cyber-attacks, for instance, can disable critical infrastructure, disrupt communication networks, and compromise sensitive military information without a single shot being fired. Similarly, disinformation campaigns and digital propaganda have emerged as powerful tools that can manipulate public perception, create social polarization, and weaken trust in government institutions. These forms of influence operations demonstrate that modern conflicts are not limited to physical battlefields but extend deeply into the cognitive and informational domains of society (Shaw, 2020).

The emergence of hybrid warfare further illustrates the complexity of contemporary threats. Hybrid warfare combines conventional military operations with irregular tactics such as cyber warfare, information manipulation, economic pressure, and proxy conflicts. This combination creates ambiguity that complicates traditional responses by military institutions. Hybrid strategies allow adversaries to exploit vulnerabilities within political systems, social structures, and technological infrastructure while avoiding direct confrontation with superior military forces (Raska, 2016).

In this context, the concept of national defense must be understood in broader terms that extend beyond traditional military engagements. Military organizations must develop capabilities that enable them to anticipate, detect, and respond to threats that may emerge in various forms and domains. The ability to adapt rapidly to changing threat dynamics has become a critical determinant of strategic superiority in modern warfare. As Raska (2016) argues, the capacity for institutional adaptability is a key factor that enables military organizations to maintain operational effectiveness in an increasingly uncertain security environment.

Consequently, military preparation can no longer rely solely on conventional combat training. Instead, armed forces must cultivate a comprehensive readiness framework that integrates technological innovation, cognitive preparedness, and interagency cooperation. This transformation requires the development of training systems capable of preparing military personnel to operate in complex environments where physical, informational, and cyber threats intersect simultaneously.

The Strategic Meaning of Continuous Military Training

Military training has traditionally been regarded as a process of preparing soldiers for battlefield operations. However, in the contemporary era, training must be understood as a continuous educational process that supports the lifelong development of military professionals. Continuous training represents a systematic and iterative cycle of education, practice, evaluation, and improvement that aims to enhance the capabilities of military personnel at individual, collective, and organizational levels. The concept of continuous training emphasizes that military competence cannot be achieved through one-time instruction or isolated training activities. Instead, it requires ongoing development that adapts to evolving operational requirements and technological advancements. According to Dandeker and Gow (2013), continuous training functions as a dynamic mechanism that ensures military organizations remain responsive to emerging strategic challenges.

Modern military institutions increasingly adopt cyclical training models that incorporate iterative learning processes. One prominent example is the spiral training model applied within NATO training frameworks. This model conceptualizes training as a progressive sequence of stages in which each training cycle builds upon lessons learned from previous exercises. Through this approach, training outcomes are continuously evaluated and refined to ensure that military capabilities evolve in alignment with changing strategic conditions (NATO, 2018).

Continuous training therefore extends beyond the mastery of technical procedures. It also involves the development of critical thinking skills, situational awareness, and adaptive leadership. Soldiers must be capable of making rapid decisions in highly uncertain environments, where incomplete information and rapidly changing conditions are common. As Snyder (2021) emphasizes, modern soldiers must possess not only tactical proficiency but also cognitive flexibility that enables them to interpret complex operational environments and respond effectively.

Another important dimension of continuous training is its role in cultivating a culture of professional learning within military institutions. When training is perceived merely as an administrative requirement, its strategic value may be diminished. Conversely, when training is integrated into the broader professional development framework of military personnel, it becomes a powerful instrument for strengthening institutional resilience and operational excellence. This perspective highlights the importance of designing training programs that are both contextual and progressive. Training activities must be

regularly updated to reflect current threat conditions, technological developments, and doctrinal changes. By maintaining a dynamic training cycle, military organizations can ensure that their personnel remain prepared to face emerging challenges in an increasingly complex security environment.

Individual Readiness: Building the Foundation of Military Capability

At the most fundamental level, military readiness begins with the preparedness of individual soldiers. Individual readiness refers to the ability of each military member to perform assigned tasks effectively under a wide range of operational conditions. This readiness encompasses a combination of technical competence, physical endurance, psychological resilience, and cognitive capability. One essential component of individual readiness is mastery of basic soldiering skills. These skills form the operational foundation upon which more complex military capabilities are built. Soldiers must possess comprehensive knowledge of navigation, marksmanship, tactical communication, and field survival techniques. Mastery of these competencies ensures that military personnel are capable of operating autonomously, when necessary, particularly in situations where communication with higher command structures may be disrupted (Snyder, 2021).

Physical endurance represents another critical element of individual readiness. Military operations often require sustained physical effort under demanding environmental conditions. Routine physical training, including endurance running, obstacle courses, swimming, and combat sports, plays a vital role in maintaining the physical fitness necessary for operational effectiveness. However, physical strength alone is insufficient. Modern military operations also require psychological resilience that enables soldiers to withstand stress, uncertainty, and prolonged operational pressure (Shaw, 2020).

Psychological preparedness involves the cultivation of discipline, emotional control, and mental toughness. Soldiers must be capable of maintaining composure in high-risk situations where rapid decision-making is required. Training programs therefore increasingly incorporate stress management techniques, leadership development exercises, and team-building activities designed to strengthen morale and cohesion.

In addition to physical and psychological preparation, cognitive skills have become increasingly important in modern military operations. Soldiers must be able to interpret complex information, assess rapidly evolving situations, and coordinate effectively with other units. Simulation-based training and war-gaming exercises have emerged as effective tools for developing these cognitive competencies. Through realistic scenarios, soldiers can practice decision-making processes and evaluate the consequences of their actions in a controlled environment. The integration of these elements' technical skills, physical fitness, psychological resilience, and cognitive awareness forms the basis of individual readiness. Without strong individual foundations, collective military capabilities cannot function effectively. Therefore, continuous training must prioritize the holistic development of soldiers as adaptable and resilient professionals.

Collective Training and Integrated Operational Capability

While individual readiness forms the foundation of military capability, modern military operations rely heavily on collective coordination among multiple units and operational domains. Collective training therefore plays a crucial role in transforming individual competencies into cohesive operational performance. Field Training Exercises (FTX) represent one of the most effective methods for developing collective capabilities. These exercises simulate realistic operational scenarios in which military units must coordinate movements, implement tactical formations, and execute mission objectives under simulated combat conditions. By conducting training in diverse terrains and weather conditions, military organizations can prepare units to operate effectively across a wide range of operational environments.

Command and control systems constitute another essential component of collective training. Effective mission execution depends on the ability of commanders to transmit clear instructions and maintain reliable communication with subordinate units. In modern warfare, this process is supported by advanced information systems collectively known as C4ISR—Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance. These systems enable real-time information sharing and enhance situational awareness across the operational battlefield (NATO, 2018). Training programs must therefore incorporate exercises that integrate C4ISR technologies into operational planning and execution. Soldiers must become familiar with digital communication systems, intelligence analysis tools, and surveillance technologies that support modern military operations. This technological integration ensures that military units can respond quickly and effectively to evolving operational conditions.

Collective training also includes emergency response procedures and tactical maneuver exercises. These activities prepare units to respond to unexpected incidents such as ambushes, sabotage attempts, or sudden enemy attacks. Training scenarios often include casualty evacuation procedures, defensive repositioning, and coordinated counterattacks. By practicing these procedures repeatedly, military units develop the reflexive coordination necessary for effective battlefield performance. Ultimately, collective training strengthens the cohesion and coordination required for successful military operations. Through repeated joint exercises, soldiers learn to trust their teammates, understand command structures, and execute complex missions with greater efficiency.

Scenario-Based Training in the Era of Hybrid Warfare

Scenario-based training has emerged as a crucial approach in preparing military forces for contemporary conflicts. Unlike traditional training methods that focus primarily on standardized procedures, scenario-based training emphasizes adaptability and problem-solving within realistic operational contexts. One key component of this approach is cyber threat simulation. As military operations increasingly depend on digital infrastructure, cyber-attacks have become a significant risk to national defense systems. Cyber warfare training prepares military personnel to identify vulnerabilities within

communication networks, protect sensitive information systems, and respond effectively to cyber intrusions.

Information warfare simulations also play an important role in scenario-based training. These exercises examine how disinformation campaigns and psychological operations can influence public perception and decision-making processes. By understanding these dynamics, military personnel can develop strategies to counter hostile information campaigns and protect national information ecosystems. Urban warfare training represents another critical dimension of scenario-based preparation. Many contemporary conflicts occur in densely populated urban environments where civilian presence complicates military operations. Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) training focuses on building infiltration techniques, close-quarters combat, building clearance procedures, and civilian protection strategies.

Scenario-based training also includes disaster response and humanitarian assistance operations. In many countries, military forces play an essential role in responding to natural disasters and humanitarian crises. Training programs must therefore prepare military personnel to coordinate with civilian agencies, conduct mass evacuation operations, and deliver emergency logistical support. By incorporating diverse scenarios into training exercises, military organizations can prepare personnel to respond flexibly to a wide range of operational challenges.

The Role of Evaluation in Continuous Training Systems

Evaluation constitutes a fundamental component of effective training systems. Without systematic evaluation, it becomes difficult to determine whether training objectives have been achieved or whether improvements are necessary. Evaluation processes enable military organizations to identify strengths, detect weaknesses, and refine training programs accordingly. One important function of evaluation is the identification of gaps between doctrine and operational practice. Military doctrines may evolve in response to changing strategic conditions, but training programs must be updated accordingly to ensure alignment between theory and implementation. Failure to maintain this alignment can result in operational inefficiencies and increased risks during actual missions.

Technological advancements have significantly enhanced the effectiveness of training evaluation processes. Digital monitoring systems, performance analytics, and real-time feedback mechanisms allow trainers to assess soldier performance with greater precision. These tools enable instructors to track individual progress, identify areas requiring improvement, and tailor training programs to address specific weaknesses. Furthermore, evaluation systems contribute to organizational learning within military institutions. By systematically analyzing training outcomes, military organizations can accumulate valuable knowledge that informs future training design. This continuous learning process supports the long-term development of military capability and institutional resilience.

Challenges in Implementing Continuous Training Systems

Despite the strategic importance of continuous training, many countries face significant challenges in implementing effective training systems. One of the most common obstacles is limited financial resources. Advanced training technologies such as simulation systems, virtual reality platforms, and digital analytics tools require substantial investment. In developing countries, defense budgets often prioritize equipment procurement over training infrastructure development. As a result, training programs may rely heavily on traditional methods that do not fully reflect contemporary operational realities. This imbalance can hinder the ability of military forces to adapt to evolving threat environments (Putra, 2020).

Another challenge involves the gap between policy formulation at the central level and implementation at the unit level. Training policies may be well designed at the strategic level, yet practical implementation may vary due to differences in resources, leadership, and organizational culture. Without effective monitoring and coordination mechanisms, training cycles may become fragmented and inconsistent. Cultural factors also play a significant role in shaping training effectiveness. In some military organizations, training activities may be perceived as administrative obligations rather than opportunities for professional growth. Transforming this mindset requires strong leadership commitment and the development of institutional cultures that value continuous learning and innovation.

Strategic Recommendations for Strengthening Military Training

To maximize the strategic value of continuous training, several key measures should be implemented. First, military doctrines and training programs must be regularly aligned through institutional coordination between policy makers, military educational institutions, and operational units.

Second, military organizations should expand the use of digital training technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality simulations. These tools allow soldiers to experience realistic operational scenarios without the logistical constraints associated with large-scale field exercises.

Third, the adoption of data-driven evaluation systems can significantly enhance training effectiveness. Predictive analytics can help identify skill gaps, monitor competency development, and support evidence-based decision-making in training design.

Fourth, training programs should integrate cyber warfare, information operations, and hybrid conflict scenarios into core military curricula. This integration ensures that military personnel are prepared to address emerging threats that extend beyond traditional combat operations.

Finally, military institutions must cultivate a culture of continuous learning in which training is recognized as an essential component of professional military development. When training is treated as a strategic investment rather than a routine obligation, military organizations can strengthen their readiness and adaptability in the face of evolving global security challenges.

Table 1. of Research Findings

No	Findings Aspect	Indicators of Findings	Description of Findings
1	Contemporary Threat Dynamics	Characteristics of modern threats	Modern security threats are non-linear, asymmetrical, and multidimensional, including cyber warfare, disinformation, hybrid warfare, and conflicts within digital and information domains that can weaken national defense systems without direct military confrontation.
2	Military Adaptation Requirements	Institutional adaptability	Military institutions must be able to adapt rapidly to changes in the strategic environment by integrating digital technologies, information systems, and multidomain defense strategies.
3	Importance of Continuous Training	Sustainable training systems	Military training cannot be conducted as a one-time activity; instead, it must be implemented continuously through cycles of planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement to enhance long-term combat readiness.
4	Individual Soldier Readiness	Individual competence	Individual readiness includes mastery of basic military skills, physical endurance, psychological resilience, and cognitive capabilities in decision-making under pressure.
5	Collective Training	Unit coordination	Collective training such as Field Training Exercises (FTX) and tactical exercises enables integration of capabilities among units and improves operational coordination during military missions.
6	Command System Integration	Use of C4ISR technology	The success of military operations largely depends on the integration of command and control systems supported by technologies such as C4ISR that facilitate real-time communication, intelligence, and surveillance.

7	Scenario-Based Training	Realistic operational scenarios	Scenario-based training covering cyber warfare, hybrid warfare, and urban operations allows soldiers to prepare for complex situations similar to real operational environments.
8	Joint and Combined Training	Inter-service and international cooperation	Joint exercises between military branches and combined exercises with international partners enhance interoperability, operational standards, and defense diplomacy.
9	Training Evaluation	Data-driven evaluation systems	Systematic training evaluation helps identify gaps between doctrine and implementation and serves as a basis for improving training effectiveness in future programs.
10	Implementation Challenges	Structural and financial constraints	The implementation of continuous training still faces challenges such as limited budgets, gaps between central policies and field implementation, and organizational cultures that are not yet fully learning-oriented.
11	Organizational Cultural Transformation	Learning-oriented military mindset	A transformation of organizational culture is necessary so that military training is perceived as a strategic investment in professional development rather than merely an administrative obligation.
12	Strengthening Training Systems	Integration of technology and evaluation	Strengthening military training systems requires the adoption of digital simulation technologies, data-based evaluation mechanisms, and continuous updates of training curricula aligned with evolving global threats.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study highlights the critical importance of continuous military training in strengthening operational readiness amid the increasingly complex dynamics of contemporary threats. Modern security challenges are characterized by non-linear conflicts, cyber-attacks, information warfare, hybrid operations, and rapidly evolving technological environments. Under such conditions, conventional approaches to military preparedness are no longer sufficient to ensure national defense effectiveness. Therefore, armed forces must adopt adaptive training systems that continuously develop individual competence, collective coordination, and strategic awareness.

Continuous training enables soldiers to maintain physical endurance, psychological resilience, and cognitive agility when facing uncertain operational environments. At the same time, collective exercises strengthen interoperability between units, improve command and control mechanisms, and support the integration of modern technologies such as C4ISR systems and digital communication networks. Scenario based training further enhances military readiness by preparing forces to respond to cyber threats, urban warfare, disaster response, and multidimensional crisis situations.

In addition, joint and combined exercises with international partners strengthen defense diplomacy, operational standardization, and multinational cooperation. However, the implementation of continuous training still faces several structural challenges, including limited budgets, unequal training infrastructure, technological gaps, and inconsistencies between policy design and field implementation.

Addressing these challenges requires stronger institutional coordination, sustainable investment in training technology, and the development of a professional learning culture within military organizations. Ultimately, continuous training should be viewed not merely as a routine activity but as a strategic investment that ensures military adaptability, strengthens combat effectiveness, and sustains long term national defense capability in an unpredictable global security environment where preparedness determines deterrence, resilience, and operational credibility of national armed forces in both conventional and nontraditional security missions across evolving strategic environments worldwide today and tomorrow alike for national stability and security sustainability in the future defense landscape of modern states facing complex global threats today worldwide.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future research should focus on examining the development of continuous military training systems that integrate advanced digital technologies and data-driven approaches to strengthen operational readiness in facing contemporary threats. In particular, future studies can explore the use of big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and simulation-based learning systems to analyze training effectiveness, predict capability gaps, and improve decision-making processes within military organizations. The integration of digital monitoring systems and performance data can help map patterns of individual and collective competency development during training cycles, allowing commanders to evaluate readiness levels more accurately and in real time. Furthermore, comparative studies across different countries could provide deeper insights into how modern militaries design adaptive training models, especially in responding to hybrid warfare, cyber threats, and multidimensional security challenges. Such interdisciplinary research combining military science, data analytics, and organizational learning would contribute significantly to the development of more adaptive, technology-supported, and evidence-based training frameworks that enhance long-term defense capability and strategic resilience in an increasingly complex global security environment.

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