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Maximizing Defence Strategies: The Role of Civilian Armies in Taiwan and Ukraine

As stated by the call for papers, cooperation within defence spans further than inter-government cooperation, into other forms of joint partnerships, including civilian-army relations. Before the invasion of Ukraine, civilians were able to join territorial defence units, acting as a form of reserve military personnel. However, at the outbreak of war, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian civilians lurched into action, and admissions into local territorial centres began just a few hours after the invasion began. With the hindsight we have now, it is clear that the mass amounts of civilian volunteers taking on a military capacity, saturated numbers, leading to both domestic success and international praise. Academics and strategists alike heavily debate what the outcomes of the war could be, but also whether China, an emerging superpower, will also initiate their own objective of securing Taiwan.

If China were to invade, President Biden, against Americas ambiguous stance, has stated that they would come to the defence of the island in a military capacity. However, with China being the largest contender the U.S. has seen, dwarfing the Soviet Union and Imperialist Japan, there could be a need for many more defenders on the island. Ukraine will thus be used as a point of reference to understand the need for utilising civilians to prepare for a potential future invasion of Taiwan.