



STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE COLLEGE (IADC) 2026-2030

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic security landscape, the Americas face increasingly complex and interconnected threats, including cyberattacks, transnational organized crime, climate-induced disasters, irregular migration flows, and changing forms of armed conflict. These and other challenges are transnational in scope and require integrated, cooperative, and forward-looking responses, which is why strategic defense education and regional collaboration are essential.

The Inter-American Defense College (IADC), as an academic extension of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), plays a vital role in strengthening hemispheric security through education and the promotion of regional collaboration. As the only institution of its kind to offer accredited master's programs in Inter-American Defense and Security in all four official languages of the hemisphere, the IADC provides a unique environment for strategic thinkers and senior advisors on the ground to build collaborative relationships that transcend national borders.

With its mission based on three fundamental pillars: education, integration, and institutionality, as described in the 2021 Self-Study Accreditation Report, the Faculty, since its foundation in 1962, has graduated more than 3,000 students from 29 countries. Approximately 25% of alumni have achieved the rank of general or civilian equivalent, and distinguished graduates include national presidents, defense ministers, ambassadors, heads of military service, and other senior officials.

During the academic year at IADC, students, faculty, staff, and alumni participate in a rigorous curriculum that fosters not only analytical and leadership skills, but also intercultural, linguistic, and international integration. This diverse environment promotes the development of hemispheric solutions to hemispheric challenges, as graduates return to their home

countries with the skills and perspectives necessary to implement integrated security strategies and foster regional cooperation.

IADC supports a wide variety of extracurricular social events throughout the year to strengthen integrated networks among students, staff, and faculty. The IADC also supports a network for students' families. The "Circle of Friends" organizes monthly events at the School, where spouses and family members can connect, network, support each other, and strengthen family resilience.

Integration is also achieved through the broad alliances and relationships established between the IADC and other professional organizations in the hemisphere. Between academic civil and national defense institutions, regional institutions, and organizational oversight institutions, the IADC regularly interacts with professionals from throughout the hemisphere to share ideas, foster relationships, and exceed the standards entrusted to it by the OAS and the IADB.

Through its strategic connection to the IADB, the IADC supports a broad set of lines of action, including cybersecurity, confidence-building measures, new technologies, and Hemispheric Security and Defense issues. The College fosters the exchange of experiences between the Armed Forces and the National Police of the region through the organization of seminars, meetings, and editorial activities, thus strengthening mutual understanding and promoting collective approaches to shared challenges.

Thus, the IADC continues to be one of the pillars of defense and security collaboration in the Americas, preparing strategic advisors to respond effectively to today's multifaceted security threats through education, integration, and institution-building.

2. BRIEF HISTORY

The idea of an educational center focused on inter-American defense was debated by the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) as early as 1957, with formal approval to create the IADC in 1959, highlighting a regional recognition of the need for specialized defense education.

The College was officially opened on October 9, 1962, at Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C., chosen for its proximity to the IADB and its adequate facilities, establishing an academic institution dedicated to defense studies in the hemisphere.

The first course began in October 1962, lasted six months, and covered organization, international context, inter-American systems, modern warfare,

and defense planning, with the initial objective of preparing the army for inter-American cooperation.

Early recommendations proposed expanding courses and integrating civilian teachers with backgrounds in politics, sociology, and economics, as well as the inclusion of civilian students, indicating early recognition of the expansion of educational outreach beyond purely military training.

In 1965, the courses were expanded to nine months, reflecting a gradual expansion in the depth and complexity of the studies to better prepare leaders for an evolving strategic environment.

The founding of the College was based on promoting cooperation among Member States through a multidisciplinary approach to advocacy, which would eventually align with the mission of preparing civilian, military, law enforcement and government officials for high-level strategic roles through accredited master's degree programs.

Between 1977 and 1985, the IADC received certification from the American Council on Education, and a Special commission to review the curriculum (1978) recommended the incorporation of civilians with expertise in socioeconomic issues, simulations, and case studies as pedagogical methodologies, as well as frequent evaluation of the curriculum to reflect continental and global dynamics.

In 1985, an additional curricular assessment was suggested to integrate contemporary technological issues such as nuclear power, cybernetics, and informatics, reflecting IADC's commitment to maintaining a constant assessment process to prepare its students for high-level discussions on current issues of hemispheric importance.

These historic milestones demonstrate the institution's progressive shift toward a comprehensive and multidimensional education, recognizing that hemispheric threats evolved beyond the traditional military approach. In the late 1980s and 1990s, institutional analyses identified that the IADC remained focused on the problems of the Cold War while the hemisphere underwent significant transformations. The attack of September 11, 2001 catalyzed the creation of a Modernization Task Force (MWG), reflecting the need for institutional adaptation.

The conceptual turning point occurred with the adoption of the Declaration on Security in the Americas, adopted at the OAS Special Conference on Security (Mexico, 2003). This declaration formally introduces the concept of multidimensional security, expanding the understanding of hemispheric threats beyond conventional military conflicts to include transnational organized crime, terrorism, cybersecurity, and other emerging challenges.

The IADC incorporated these new definitions into its academic program, marking the official transition of the institutional approach.

In 2004, the program was renamed the "Higher Course in Hemispheric Security and Defense," marking the first time that the term "Security" formally appears in the program's institutional name, reflecting the College's conceptual evolution.

By 2015, the IADC had consolidated its status as an accredited institution of higher education, securing the authorization to confer a Master's Degree in Inter-American Security and Defense Sciences.

In 2018, the Inter-American Defense College (IADC) initiated its institutional accreditation process with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), an accrediting body that evaluates more than 500 degree-granting institutions worldwide through a rigorous system of peer review and continuous quality assurance. In June 2021, MSCHE granted full accreditation with an effective date retroactive to March 2018, formally recognizing that the IADC met the Commission's high standards for academic quality, governance, assessment, and institutional effectiveness.

For an institution of IADC's size, mission specificity, and international composition, achieving MSCHE accreditation represents a unique institutional milestone. This international accreditation confirmed that the College operates at a level comparable to much larger and more resource-intensive institutions, despite its relatively small scale, specialized focus, and multinational student and faculty population. This achievement makes IADC part of a select group of internationally accredited institutions in the fields of defense and security and affirms its standing as a peer to other institutions delivering Joint Professional Military Education (JPME).

Actually, beyond formal recognition, MSCHE accreditation reflects IADC's capacity to meet the highest standards of civilian higher education while maintaining the unique academic, professional, and multinational characteristics of a security- and defense-focused institution.

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The College complies with U.S. Federal Regulations for an institution of higher education, as well as the policies and requirements of the DoW, OAS, IADB, MSCHE, and the District of Columbia (HELC). All processes and procedures are carried out with attention to maintaining ethical standards and integrity to provide a high-quality education, remain true to the School's stakeholders, and reflect the School's mission and Institutional Learning Objectives (ILOs).

The following documents establish the IADC's robust regulatory framework:

- a. Letter from the Organization of American States (A-41).
- b. Inter-American Democratic Charter - AG/RES.1 (XXVIII-E/01).
- c. Strategic Vision of the OAS - AG/RES, 2814 (XLIV-0/14).
- d. Statute of the Inter-American Defense Board - AG/RES.1 (XXXII-E/06).
- e. Rules of Procedure of the Council of Delegates of the IADB (R-1).
- f. Staff Rules (R-2).
- g. Financial Regulations (R-3).
- h. Regulations of the Inter-American Defense College.
- i. IADB Strategic Planning Guide of November 20, 2019.
- j. Strategic Plan of the former Inter-American Defense Board dated between 2022 and 2025 and its revision in force from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2025.
- k. Resolution No. 212/2020 of the Council of Delegates of the IADB, in which the SWOT analysis was approved during the Ordinary Meeting No. 1423 of August 25, 2020.
- l. Resolution No. 191 dated June 18, 2019 of the Council of Delegates of the IADB, which modifies the Regulations of the Inter-American Defense College to adapt them to the Accreditation Standards.
- m. Strategic Plan of the Inter-American Defense Board dated 2026-2030, whose implementation will be from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2030.
- n. IADC Department Guides.
- o. IADC Course Catalog and 65th Year Student Handbook.
- p. IADB Code of Ethics.

4. MISSION, VISION and VALUES

4.1 MISSION STATEMENT (2026-2030)

"To prepare military officers, police, and civilian government officials of OAS Member States as high-level strategic advisors on inter-American defense and security matters, through graduate and advanced academic programs, in order to increase inter-American cooperation."

4.2 VISION STATEMENT (2026-2030)

"To consolidate our reputation as an academic benchmark and a hub for cooperation on Inter-American Defense and Security issues, and as a reliable institutional partner, recognized for preparing strategic advisors to face complex and dynamic hemispheric challenges."

4.3 - VALUES

1. **Academic Rigor:** Demonstrated by the accredited and authorized graduate curriculum.
2. **Academic freedom:** Represented by the freedom to think creatively and develop innovative ideas to advance research lines, as well as the free expression of ideas by students, faculty, and staff across all institutional and academic activities of the IADC.
3. **Academic integrity:** Defined as ‘a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five core values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.’ Ethical conduct is a fundamental element of human development, and IADC adopts, promotes, and requires academic integrity.
4. **Mutual respect:** Defined as the respectful and harmonious way in which people treat one another in all interactions at IADC. Professionalism is paramount.
5. **Cooperation:** Is the institutional commitment to collaborative engagement among nations and organizations to promote trust, strengthen partnerships, and generate integrated solutions. Through coordinated action and knowledge exchange, it enables effective responses to hemispheric security and defense challenges, reinforcing the principle that shared problems require collective solutions.

5. STRATEGIC DIAGNOSIS

5.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: STRENGTHS + WEAKNESSES:

STRENGTHS

The following are the main institutional assets of the IADC presented in a concise and strategic manner:

- Permanent license to operate as an academic institution of higher education (HELC) and internationally recognized accreditation (MSCHE).

- Internationally accredited master's degree program in hemispheric security and defense, taught uniquely in four languages simultaneously.
- A network of influential alumni that includes presidents, ministers, and senior military and civilian leaders, demonstrating the true impact and relevance of the IADC in the field of hemispheric security.
- Multidisciplinary, multicultural, and international faculty and staff, fostering an inclusive and dynamic learning environment, onboarding recent alumni as graduate fellows, and prioritizing the integration of multiple perspectives in the development of collaborative strategic solutions to hemispheric defense and security challenges.
- Governed by a multinational organization with broad hemispheric recognition.
- Diplomatic relations and strategic agreements strengthen cooperation between governments and other academic institutions, expanding influence and opportunities for academic and professional exchange for students and faculty.
- Strategic location in Washington, D.C., facilitating direct connections to key global and regional organizations, and proximity to the governing bodies of the OAS and the IADB.
- IADC's international recognition and experience allow it to secure long-lasting strategic partnerships, attract diverse resources, and strengthen a resilient institutional structure prepared for changing scenarios.

WEAKNESSES

Below are the three critical internal structural constraints affecting the institution:

- High staff turnover challenges the continuity and consolidation of institutional experience, putting operational and academic stability to the test.
- Reliance on voluntary national contributions for staff, which creates uncertainty in the availability of key human resources and limits long-term planning.

- Budgetary constraints based on limited financial contributions from OAS and its member states, and over-reliance on host country funding.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: OPPORTUNITIES + THREATS:

OPPORTUNITIES

Below are the nine strategic opportunities identified in the external environment:

- Demand for multidimensional security education based on the changing challenges of the region.
- Alumni network engagement to strengthen the strategic reach and capacities of the IADC.
- Interest in collaboration between the IADC and the hemispheric commitment of countries that are not members of the OAS.
- Access to emerging technologies relevant to innovation in the education and security sectors.
- Institutional relations and strategic alliances that facilitate collaboration, participation in hemispheric forums, and specialized professional exchange.
- Direct or indirect roles in the formulation of hemispheric related to defense and security policies.
- Growing interest in interdisciplinary and multidimensional security approaches among new student profiles.
- Financial diversification and institutional expansion through new partnerships.
- The strategic use of alumni, especially those in leadership positions, enhances the visibility and reputation of the IADC, facilitates partnerships, and multiplies collaborative impact throughout the hemispheric region.

THREATS

Below are the four main external threats that compromise institutional sustainability:

- Potential reductions in funding and support from the OAS and member state governments could jeopardize the operational sustainability and development of key programs.
- Political changes in member countries (including the host country) could lead to a shift in strategic priorities and a decrease in financial and staff support.
- The rapid pace of technological change and the evolution of cyber threats could challenge institutional capacities in terms of educational infrastructure and teaching-learning methodologies.
- Misinformation and misperception about the role and scope of the IADC limit the visibility and support of the College in political and social contexts.

6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE IADC

The College's Strategic Objectives (SO) are grounded in the Mission of the IADC and are executed through the Associated Objectives (AOs). These establish the strategic direction necessary to fulfill our mission, ensuring the achievement of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), and students' ability to achieve their course learning outcomes (CLOs). These objectives are applicable to current and future academic programs, supporting our success in consolidating the Institutional Vision as a reliable academic benchmark and institutional partner in the field of multidimensional defense and security in the hemisphere.

1. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SO1

"To achieve sustainable execution, targeted innovation, and continuous evaluation of academic programming to support compliance with institutional learning outcomes and maintain standards of accreditation and academic excellence."

This objective is directly aligned with IADB Strategic Objective 2, which seeks to consolidate the Board as a technical and educational reference in the

hemisphere through high-level academic excellence and constant innovation in defense and security studies.

ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES OF SO1:

- **Associated Objective 1.1:** "Execute the annual academic program, conduct ongoing systematic reviews to identify emerging topics, ensure compliance with accreditation requirements, the College's learning outcomes, and institutional priorities."
- **Associated Objective 1.2:** "Foster an environment of academic freedom, integrity, and rigor in the adoption of educational technologies and innovative teaching methodologies."
- **Associated Objective 1.3:** "Implement a program for faculty development, recognition, and retention to strengthen academic excellence."
- **Associate Objective 1.4:** "To achieve the position as a leading institution in applied research on hemispheric defense and security by fostering applied research through the engagement of visiting scholars, specialized seminars, and the strategic use of academic cooperation agreements and the alumni network."

2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SO2

"Enhance the strategic value of institutional partnerships and value relationships with alumni to foster regional knowledge sharing, strengthen the College's reputation and visibility, and promote inter-American cooperation."

This objective supports IADB Strategic Objective 3 by strengthening the institutional positioning of the Inter-American system through strategic alliances, diplomatic engagement, and the consolidation of an influential global alumni network.

SO2 ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES:

- **Associated Objective 2.1:** "Strengthen existing institutional partnerships and establish new academic agreements with regional universities and defense and security institutions."
- **Associated Objective 2.2:** "Ensure that academic partnerships support the IADC's mission through joint teaching, research, and outreach programs."
- **Associate Objective 2.3:** "Enhance alumni engagement through mentoring programs, continuing education opportunities, regional networking activities, and professional development initiatives."

- **Associate Objective 2.4:** "Improve the positioning, visibility, and reputation of the IADC as a hemispheric benchmark in inter-American defense and security through strategic communication and strong presence across media and digital platforms."

3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SO3

"Improve inter-American and inter-institutional representation in academic programming, governance, resourcing, and outreach activities to ensure alignment with the mission."

This objective fulfills the mandate of IADB Strategic Objective 1 by promoting multilateral cooperation and ensuring that diverse representation and active participation of OAS Member States are central to the coordination of hemispheric defense strategies.

SO3 ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES:

- **Associate Objective 3.1:** "Increase the representativeness of the student body and staff, ensuring a balanced participation from all Member States."
- **Associated Objective 3.2:** "Advocate for diverse partnerships to secure the human, financial, and knowledge resources needed to sustain and expand our educational activities."
- **Associate Objective 3.3:** "Promote structured educational exchanges with regional partner institutions, including visiting faculty, seminars with international experts, and joint academic initiatives that enrich the multidimensional dialogue on hemispheric defense and security."
- **Associated Objective 3.4:** "Foster academic and administrative governance grounded in multinational inclusion, ensuring that the composition of students, faculty, and advisory bodies reflects balanced and diverse national perspectives."

4. Strategic Objective SO4

"Broaden funding sources and strengthen institutional processes to ensure sustainability and improve the effectiveness of the College's operations and programming."

This objective mirrors IADB Strategic Objective 4, focusing on the optimization of institutional management and the strengthening of internal processes to ensure long-term financial, operational, and technological sustainability.

SO4 ASSOCIATED OBJECTIVES:

- **Associated Objective 4.1:** "Advocate for increasing resources from OAS and strengthening institutional processes to ensure sustainability and improve the effectiveness of the College's operations, facilities maintenance and academic programming."
- **Associated Objective 4.2:** "Enhance efficiency in the use of institutional resources through results-based management, digitalization processes, and systematic evaluation mechanisms."
- **Associated Objective 4.3:** "Maintain academic excellence by meeting accreditation and licensing standards, ensuring institutional recognition."
- **Associated Objective 4.4:** "Strengthen operational and cyber resilience through institutional knowledge management, effective communication with stakeholders, continuity plans, and international risk management standards."

7. EVALUATION OF THE IADC

7.1. Data-Driven Assessment Framework.

The evaluation of the Strategic Plan 2026-2030 is constituted as a data-based organizational imperative where systematic feedback guides management decision-making, allowing the IADC to rigorously measure the fulfillment of its four Strategic Objectives (SO) and its Associated Objectives (AO) through the execution of the 22 institutional tasks of the Action Plan. which will be monitored through Performance Measures (MoPs) and Effectiveness Measures (MoEs) to verify the tangible impact of academic excellence on hemispheric security.

7.2. Methodology and Continuous Improvement (ARP3).

The College will utilize the Evaluation and Review Process and Procedures Plan (ARP3) as its primary technical tool to ensure academic quality. In the 2026-2030 cycle, this framework will incorporate new indicators to measure the effectiveness of targeted innovation, as well as the strengthening of inter-American cooperation. This evaluative culture ensures the efficient allocation of financial and human resources by prioritizing initiatives that demonstrate superior operational and academic resilience

7.3. International Accreditation Standards.

A critical component of this assessment system is ensuring continued alignment with the standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The data collected and analyzed during the first years of this plan will serve as the main evidence for the Self-Study process and the

evaluation visit scheduled for the period 2028-2029. This approach ensures that the IADC maintains its international recognition and meets the standards of integrity and academic rigor required for accredited higher education institutions.

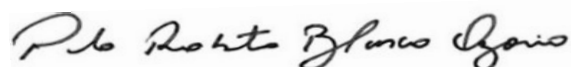
8. FINAL REMARKS

The IADC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 represents a decisive step toward institutional maturity, reinforcing our commitment to academic excellence and hemispheric integration. This plan is not merely a roadmap for growth, but a strategic alignment with the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), ensuring that our educational mission directly supports the security and defense requirements of the OAS Member States. By adopting a more focused and agile structure, the College is better positioned to serve as a premier academic benchmark and a vital hub for regional cooperation in an increasingly complex global environment.

Central to this new strategy is the optimization of institutional management and the stewardship of our resources. We are committed to maintaining and conserving our historic facilities while simultaneously modernizing our academic offerings through the integration of emerging technologies. This dual focus on physical sustainability and digital innovation ensures that the College remains resilient and prepared to provide high-level strategic advice. Furthermore, our emphasis on increasing diverse representation and active participation reflects our belief that shared hemispheric challenges require truly collective and inclusive solutions.

In conclusion, the successful execution of this plan relies on the continuous assessment provided by the ARP3 framework and the enduring strength of our institutional partnerships and alumni network. As we move toward 2030, the IADC will continue to foster a culture of integrity and academic freedom, preparing military, police, and civilian leaders to lead with vision and professionalism. Through the shared dedication of our faculty, staff, and international partners, we will consolidate the College's reputation as a reliable pillar of the Inter-American system.

APPROVED



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