Three Fallacies
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Remarks at Elysée Palace on the
Occasion of the AI Action Summit
Elysée Palace
Paris, France
February 10, 2025

Monsieur le Président, Mr. Vice President, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me express my gratitude to President Macron for hosting this vital summit, and extend my appreciation to Anne Bouverot, whose leadership as Special Envoy has brought the President's ambitious vision to life.

I would like, tonight, to speak about three fallacies – three fundamental misconceptions in the way we think about artificial intelligence. These are ideas about AI many of us have heard and internalized – in our media, and our politics, and in our commerce – which no longer serve us well.

These are good-faith mistakes, narratives and conventions that have emerged as our societies have tried to make sense of this fast-moving technology. How fortunate we are to have this space to engage these misconceptions and together set a better course for the future.

The first fallacy is that the purpose of AI is efficiency and scale.

We have heard that the purpose of AI is to accelerate growth, to compete in the global marketplace, to enhance the pace of productivity.

And indeed: these are functions of AI.

But we must never confuse function for purpose. We must not mistake what AI can do with whom AI should serve.

The purpose of this power should be to benefit humanity.

To make life better and easier for people. To enhance health and ease suffering, to protect safety and promote security. To support dignity and open up opportunity, and amplify the full spectrum of human potential.

The purpose of AI is not scale or efficiency. The purpose of AI is people.

The second fallacy we've heard is that AI requires a tradeoff – between safety and progress, between competition and collaboration, and between rights and innovation.

But each of these is a false choice.

History shows us that true innovation is spurred by thoughtful governance. Environmental standards drove the development of catalytic converters. Aviation regulations gave us safer aircraft and brought our economies closer together.

With scientific collaboration and a free flowing marketplace of ideas, we've seen rapid advances in protein folding and climate modeling, and so much more. When researchers can openly share methods and models, when developers can build upon each other's work, we create a virtuous cycle of innovation.

Supporting research to align AI with our values has given us sharper methods and better models. Achieving breakthroughs requires us to reject false binaries. It calls us to govern thoughtfully.

The third fallacy, and the final one I will share, is this:

It is not inevitable that AI will lead to great public benefits. The outcomes many of us hope for, or anticipate, are not inherent features of the technology itself. They are not coded into algorithms, or embedded in neural networks.

The good that may come from AI, in science and education, in healthcare and in the economy, must be actively stewarded through leadership and true innovation – innovation that is fundamentally responsible and human-centered.

These benefits will not emerge only from the invisible hand of market dynamics. They must be cultivated in partnership with civil society and with our democratic institutions. And most critically, AI in the public interest demands the meaningful involvement of the very people whose lives could be transformed by these technologies.

I am sober about the threats of artificial intelligence, about the ways this technology can perpetuate discrimination, threaten security, and disrupt social cohesion across continents.

But I close tonight with a word of hope:

The printing press didn't just print books – it democratized knowledge. The telephone didn't just transmit voice – it connected families across great distances. The internet did more than link computers – it created unprecedented opportunities for collaboration and creativity.

We have the tools to guide AI to work for all of our people.

If we move beyond these three fallacies, if we advance thoughtful governance, we can ensure AI systems enhance rather than diminish human rights and dignity.

We can create systems that expand opportunity rather than concentrate power. We can build technology that strengthens democracy rather than undermines it.

Now, as we shape what may be humanity's most transformative innovation, we must ensure AI follows this tradition.