

US lagging in critical artificial intelligence: panel

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Former Alphabet and Google CEO Eric Schmidt is seen at a 2019 conference of the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence, which concluded that the United States is lagging in areas of AI critical to the nation's future

The United States is dangerously behind in artificial intelligence critical

to its future including national security, according to a commission that includes a former head of Google and the future chief of Amazon.

A report released by the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence called for the country to invest \$40 billion to win a strategic AI competition with China.

"America is not prepared to defend or compete in the AI era," ex-Google chief Eric Schmidt and former US deputy secretary of defense Robert Work said in a letter included with the 756-page report.

"This is the tough reality we must face," the chairs of the commission said in the report released late Monday.

The commission formed by Congress in 2018 is made up of technologists, [national security](#) professionals, business executives, and academic leaders including Oracle chief executive Safra Katz, an Andrew Jassy, who will take over head of Amazon later this year.

"AI will be the most powerful tool in generations for benefiting humanity," the letter read.

"AI systems will also be used in the pursuit of power. We fear AI tools will be weapons of first resort in future conflicts."

Nations are already using AI in disinformation attacks to sow division and confusion in democracies, the commission maintained, warning that states, terrorists, and criminals will pair it with commercially available drones to make "smart weapons."

"It is no secret that America's military rivals are integrating AI concepts and platforms to challenge the United States' decades-long technology advantage," the letter read.

"We will not be able to defend against AI-enabled threats without ubiquitous AI capabilities and new war-fighting paradigms."

China's efforts to become the world's leader in AI within a decade should worry Americans, according to the commission, which maintained that the technology is used by that country for repression and surveillance.

The commission called for the creation of a US academy that recruits and develops tech talent with rigor on par with the way military officers are cultivated.

The United States also needs to ramp up science and [technology education](#) and do more to attract highly skilled immigrants, the commission said.

The country should make a priority of reviving domestic production of sophisticated computer chips, most of which are now made at factories in Asia, according to the report.

"A strategic blockage would cost far more and put our [security](#) at risk," the report said.

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