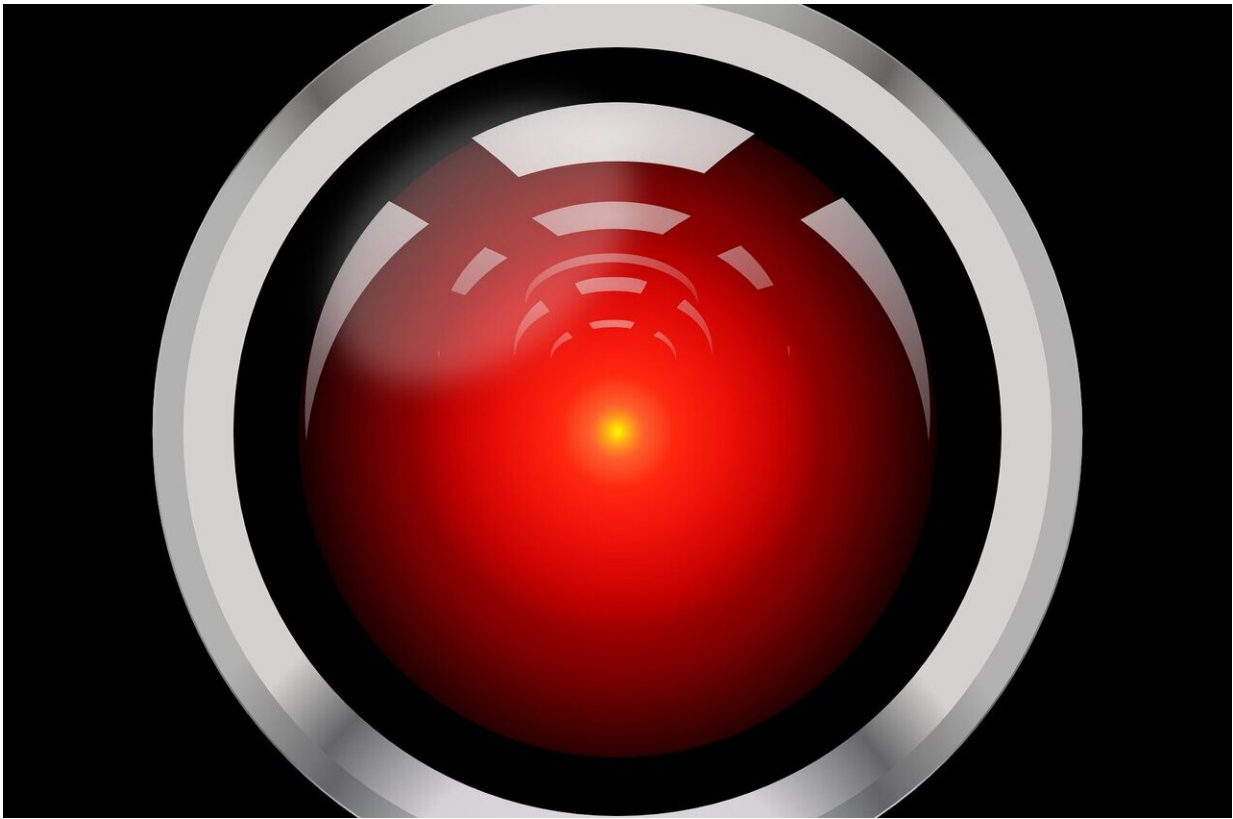


Macron says Europe needs own AI model to 'catch up'

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President Emmanuel Macron, on a visit to Serbia, said Friday that Europe needs to invest in its own artificial intelligence model to catch up with China and the United States.

Speaking at a forum in the city of Novi Sad, the French leader noted that "we Europeans are a bit behind."

"The Chinese and the Americans invest a lot more," Macron added during the trip that included France and Serbia inking a deal for 12 Rafale warplanes—in a shift away from Russian weapons for the Balkan nation.

The French president encouraged Europe to "catch up, innovate, invest much more" to be on par with Washington and Beijing, adding that AI "should serve collective goals".

Europe should develop a part-public, part-private innovation model, Macron said.

For the European Union, which has implemented a unique regulatory framework in an effort to control the technological advances of AI, the "priority is to invest", the head of state said.

"Once we reach a moment of maturity, that is when we can turn regulation into a competitive advantage," he said.

Belgrade will lead the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, while France is gearing up to host an AI summit in February 2025.

The widely fighter jet deal will see Serbia receive nine single-seat and three two-seat jets by 2029, according to Dassault chief executive Eric Trappier.

The dozen multi-role fighter aircraft will help Serbia modernize its air force and replace aging Soviet-era combat jets.

The French leader said the contract marked a courageous "strategic

change" for the Balkan country, which has traditionally been close to Russia and China, but has also applied to join the EU.

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