**Concept Note**

***Ministerial Session***

***Insights from UNESCO Readiness Assessment (RAM) exercises and country experiences***

**French AI Action Summit**

**Tuesday 11 February 2025**

1. **BACKGROUND**

By late 2024, the rapid advancement of generative AI has prompted governments and international organizations to intensify their focus on ethics and governance.

Recent UNESCO research into AI investment trends and ethical concerns highlights a transformational shift: global investment in generative AI, projected to surpass $120 billion annually by 2025, signals a pivotal moment in AI’s evolution, as venture capitalists increasingly prioritize quick-to-market solutions with significant commercial potential. Machine learning and AI infrastructure remain critical drivers of this growth, but the explosion of generative AI has redefined the funding landscape, accounting for a fivefold increase in venture capital allocations since 2020. At the same time, ethical concerns surrounding AI systems have intensified. By 2024, issues such as bias, fairness, transparency, and explainability are projected to increase by over 300% compared to 2021, underscoring the profound societal implications as AI technologies permeate everyday life. This sharp rise reflects growing awareness of the risks posed by unchecked AI development, as well as an urgent need for robust governance frameworks.

UNESCO has been at the forefront of this global movement for ethical AI governance through its Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, only global normative framework of its kind, adopted in 2021. Mandated by the commitments of 194 Member States to the implementation of the Recommendation, UNESCO is collaborating with over 60 countries, deploying its AI Readiness Assessment Methodology (RAM) to identify gaps and opportunities for ethical AI deployment. RAM outcomes are driving actionable policy guidance and capacity-building efforts**,** equipping countries with the tools needed to ensure AI’s safe and equitable integration into society.

To advance this agenda, UNESCO is organizing a Ministerial Session on the margins of the French AI Action Summit. This session builds on the momentum established by UNESCO’s 1st and 2nd Global Forum on the Ethics of AI, held in 2022 in Prague, Czechia and 2024 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, as well as the Global Dialogue on AI Governance series conducted throughout the year. It will also set the stage for the 3rd Global Forum on the Ethics of AI, scheduled to take place in Bangkok, Thailand, in June 2025.

1. **DESCRIPTION OF THE SESSION**

This gathering will focus on concrete actions to ensure that the global AI sector can drive beneficial social, economic and environmental outcomes in the public interest. In this context, UNESCO will assemble Ministers from countries that are championing ethical governance of AI to amplify the voice, enriched by the evidence collected though the RAM exercise. During this Ministerial session, speakers will share good practices, lessons learned, strategic visions and policy implications with fellow Ministers from other countries engaged in UNESCO’s Readiness Assessment process. The session will further be an excellent opportunity to develop collaborative plans on AI governance among the partner countries at varying levels of technological and policy readiness**.**

The French AI Action Summit is the ideal occasion to host this discussion, gathering Heads of State and Government, leaders of international organizations, small and large enterprises, representatives of academia, non-governmental organizations, artists and members of civil society.

1. **FORMAT OF THE SESSION**

The format of the ministerial sessions will follow the Davos style, with the moderator making a short introductory statement and proceeding with questions directed to the panelists.

Run of show:

* The panellists will not be expected to deliver speeches or presentations.
* The moderator will try to pose at least two questions to each panellist.
* Each individual intervention should be **4 minutes maximum**, with a total speaking time of 8 minutes per speaker per session.
* The session may be broken into two panels of similar nature with a break in-between, which is to ensure that each panellist will have sufficient time to elaborate on their responses.

Moderator: Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO

Speakers:

Ministers invited from The Netherlands, Türkiye, and Belgium (Flanders), Thailand, Cambodia, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines, Senegal, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Morocco, Tunisia, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Antigua and Barbuda, and Curacao, Ivory Coast.