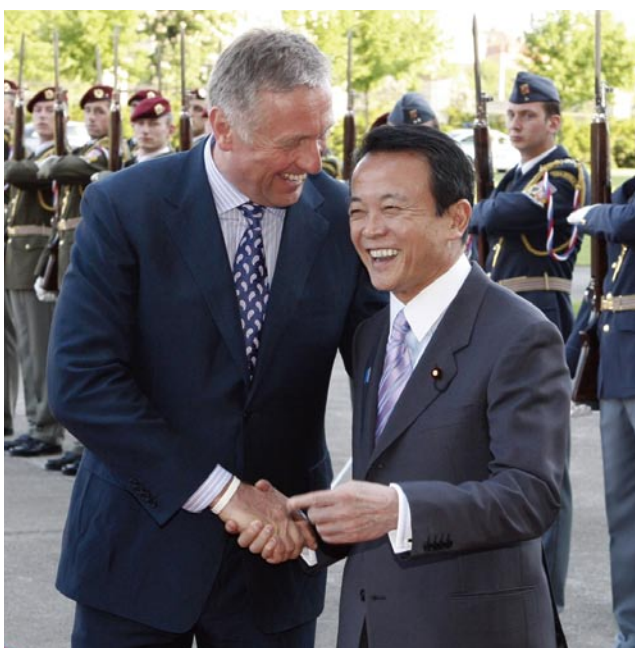




*Prime Minister Taro Aso attends a joint press conference with Czech Republic President Vaclav Klaus (center) and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso following a Japan-EU summit meeting.*

TOPICS  Prime Minister

## Visit to Europe



*Prime Minister Aso is greeted by Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek at a welcome ceremony.*

Prime Minister Taro Aso visited the Czech Republic and Germany in early May meeting with European leaders to discuss a range of issues. The prime minister arrived in the Czech Republic capital of Prague on May 3 and held talks with his Czech counterpart Mirek Topolánek following a welcome ceremony. On May 4, Prime Minister Aso attended the 18th Japan-EU summit meeting at the Prague Castle, the office of the Czech president. Representing the EU side were President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic, which currently holds the EU's rotating presidency, and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso.

The Japanese and EU leaders said in a joint press conference that they would take

the lead in solving a range of global issues. Both sides reaffirmed the commitment at the G-20 London Summit on the global financial and economic crisis. On the issue of climate change, they discussed bilateral cooperation in reaching consensus on the next framework agreement on ways of combating global warming at a U.N. conference in Copenhagen in December. They also agreed to make efforts for resolving the North Korean nuclear and missile issues.

On May 5, Prime Minister Aso proceeded to Berlin for talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the latter's office. At the meeting, the two leaders agreed to cooperate in coping with the global financial and economic crisis by combining the power of

Japan and Germany, the largest economies in Asia and Europe respectively. On the environmental issue, they agreed that the two countries will play the role of leading the world in the energy field to help realize a low-carbon society. Prime Minister Aso also paid a courtesy call on Federal President Horst Köhler and discussed the global financial and economic crisis.

Before the meeting with Chancellor Merkel in Berlin, Prime Minister Aso delivered a policy speech at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in the city. He spoke on the "Japan-Europe partnership for overcoming global issues."

 On the Internet

[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asophoto/2009/05/04eu\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asophoto/2009/05/04eu_e.html)

[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asophoto/2009/05/03czech\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asophoto/2009/05/03czech_e.html)

[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asophoto/2009/05/05germany\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/asophoto/2009/05/05germany_e.html)



*Prime Minister Aso receiving a welcome by Chancellor Merkel at the Federal Chancellery of Germany.  
Photo Cabinet Public Relations Office.*