

## All roads lead to Berlin



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said in Berlin yesterday after meeting with Czech PM Petr Fiala that the German-Czech partnership is a bilateral and European [success story](#) and that security must play a key role in its next chapter. Fiala responded that bilateral relations are [stronger than ever](#) and that the [current international situation](#) is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for close and efficient cooperation. We need to [channel the 1.5% defense-related spending](#) that is part of the new 5% Nato target into joint projects that connect our two countries, Fiala said, and this relates not just to rail links, but also to security matters. Defense Min. [Jana Černočová](#) and Finance Min. [Zbyněk Stanjura](#) have both said recently that the CR is already almost meeting this 1.5% target. Černočová said it's already at 1.3%, thanks to research and innovation, increasing the capacity of the defense industry, creating strategic reserves and building infrastructure. Based on his comments yesterday, Fiala now wants to channel this money, and more, toward Berlin. Presumably as a way to strengthen Prague's place in the [German sphere of influence](#).

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