

# CIO OFFICE MORNING MARKET WRAP 3 March 2025

Concerns about stagflation, that is a mix of inflationary pressures and more tepid growth, alongside higher tariffs planned by President Trump caused investor jitters and corrective action in the major US indices. And while Nvidia delivered still impressive earnings, it failed to revive the AI rally, with technology and the Magnificent 7 underperforming the broader market. Donald Trump announced that tariffs for Canada and Mexico would start March 4, with an additional 10% for China going into effect the same day. And 25% tariffs for Europe would be announced soon. Macro releases further weighed on the outlook for growth, as disappointments in consumer confidence and personal expenditure pointed to weakening consumption patterns. Bad weather hit the housing market, and seasonal factors negatively affected jobless claims. Inflationary pressures kept on smouldering, both in business and consumer surveys, as well as in solid wage growth. Amidst concerns about moderating growth and higher inflation, yields fell on prevailing worries about faltering expansion rates as US economic surprises went into negative territory. Overall, the S&P 500 lost 1%, the Nasdaq 3.4%, though the Dow gained 1%. Rates-sensitive sectors like financials (+2.8%) and real estate (+2.1%) topped returns, while technology (-4%) slumped. The Magnificent 7 (-3.4%) led losses, while growth anxiety saw small caps shed 1.5%. The rotation out of US stocks continued, with DM ex-US (-0.8%) outperforming, and Europe (+0.2%) closing in positive territory. EM stocks lost 4.4% dragged down by China. Yields fell heavily across the curve, the 10yr lost 22bps, the 2yr almost 21bps. Commodities were weaker as well, from gold (-2.7%), to Brent crude (-1.7%), and copper (-1%). The dollar (+0.9%) benefitted from the flight to quality.

Despite strong Q4 earnings, Nvidia shares dropped more than 7% in the five days through Friday. The company announced record quarterly and yearly revenue, with "amazing" demand for its Blackwell chip according to CEO Jensen Huang. But the company also said that its Q1 margin would tighten to about 71%, lower than what estimated by analysts, as it ramps up production for its new flagship Blackwell chip. Although Nvidia will continue to lead the AI landscape, the lack of large positive surprises against the most optimistic expectations drove a lacklustre market response.

Heated bickering between President Trump and President Zelenskiy in a White House meeting expected to produce a rare earth deal left investors in disarray. Zelenskiy has continued to reject calls for an immediate

ceasefire, while Europeans work to rebuild relations even as they have offered unwavering support to the Ukrainian president in an unprecedented rift with their primary ally. And politics dominated the start of the week as well, with the CDU/CSU center-right alliance winning the elections on Sunday led by Friedrich Merz. The alliance will have to continue talks with the Social Democrats in order to rule following the advance of the far-right Alternative for Germany. Budget issues in the end will take center stage, given the scale of investments needed for defense and infrastructure.

#### Markets this morning:

European leaders scrambled to offer Ukraine support amidst concerns about a US pullback, following an Oval Office clash between Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelenskiy. The euro is gaining 0.4%, and contracts on the EuroStoxx 50 are up almost as much as of the time of writing. Is it the prospect for a deal following President Trump's statement that he wants "peace", rather than an "advantage", or is it that Britain called a "coalition of the willing" to secure Ukraine support? US futures were little changed, while Asian stocks advanced, with China underpinned by the ongoing rally in technology shares. Traders' hopes are running high that China will be announcing fresh fiscal stimulus measures at the National People's Congress to be held the day after tomorrow. China PMI surveys released in the weekend, still hanging in the balance between expansion and contraction, exposed the country's vulnerability. Investors are also looking for last-minute negotiations that would avoid further increases of trade tariffs on Chinese goods set to come into effect this week alongside levies on Mexico and Canada. Oil and gold gained, while the US dollar was on the back foot. Bitcoin slipped, after a 20% rally from Friday's three-month low as President Trump announced certain digital assets to be included in his proposed US strategic crypto reserve.

#### Upcoming key events/data:

The week ahead includes key events such as President Trump's address to a joint session of Congress, the European Union Summit on Ukraine, and the annual meeting of China's People's Congress.

The economic data to be released includes China's business surveys, the US jobs report, and the Eurozone CPI amongst others.

Have a good day!

Chief Investment Office Wealth Management Emirates NBD.

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