8 April 2026

Global Markets Research

Daily Market Highlights

8 Apr: Two-week conditional ceasefire deal at the 11th hour

Tump suspends attack for two weeks subject to Strait of Hormuz reopening

US stocks recovered lost ground; crude oil prices retreated from recent highs

Solid US capex before the war; all eyes on FOMC meeting minutes today

- Global financial markets were largely on edge with President Trump's deadline for Iran quickly approaching with little signs of a deal. In the equity space, Stoxx Eur 600 closed almost 1.0% d/d lower while in Asia, Nikkei 225 and CSI closed flattish.
- The S&P 500 and Nasdaq nonetheless erased early losses in the final stretch of the Wall Street session, well off their lows on the eleventh hour ceasefire hopes. This comes after Pakistan, acting as an intermediary between the US and Iran, proposed a 2-week ceasefire to allow for diplomatic negotiations between the two nations. ***At the point of writing, Trump has suspended Iran attacks for two weeks, subject to the reopening of the strait of Hormuz.*** The S&P 500 and Nasdaq eked out minuscule 0.1% d/d gains, but the Dow shed 0.2% d/d.
- Meanwhile, ceasefire optimism saw WTI and Brent prices easing off their intraday highs and Treasury yields also fell in line with crude oil prices. The 2Y closed the day 6bps lower at 3.79% and the 10Y by 4bps to 4.29%. 10Y European bond yields jumped 3-12bps earlier in the day.
- Brent fell 0.5% d/d to $109.27/barrel, while the WTI closed the day 0.5% d/d higher at $112.95/barrel. At time of writing, WTI and Brent plunged further to $97.61/barrel and $95.08/barrel respectively, marking their lowest in around 2 and 4 weeks.
- The unwinding of haven trade saw the DXY easing 0.1% d/d to 99.86. Haven currencies like CHF and JPY underperformed their riskier counterparts by closing just above the flatline. AUD strengthened 0.8% d/d to 0.6974, GBP and EUR were 0.4-0.5% d/d stronger at 1.1595 and 1.3291 vs the USD respectively.
- Regional currencies closed mixed against the Dollar. MYR depreciated 0.1% d/d to 4.0297, while CNH and SGD appreciated 0.2-0.3% d/d to 6.8554 and 1.2826 respectively.

Key Market Metrics

	Level	d/d (%)
Equities		
Dow Jones	46,584.46	-0.18
S&P 500	6,616.85	0.08
NASDAQ	22,017.85	0.10
Stoxx Eur 600	590.59	-1.01
FTSE 100	10,348.79	-0.84
Nikkei 225	53,429.56	0.03
CSI 300	4,440.62	0.00
Hang Seng	25,116.53	-0.70
Straits Times	4,958.01	-0.29
KLCI 30	1,676.86	-0.24
FX		
Dollar Index	99.86	-0.12
EUR/USD	1.1595	0.47
GBP/USD	1.3291	0.42
USD/JPY	159.62	-0.04
AUD/USD	0.6974	0.81
USD/CNH	6.8554	-0.28
USD/MYR	4.0297	0.05
USD/SGD	1.2826	-0.16
USD/KHR	4,004.50	0.00
USD/THB	32.60	32.52
Commodities		
WTI ($/bbl)	112.95	0.48
Brent ($/bbl)	109.27	-0.46
Gold ($/oz)	4,657.10	0.01
Copper ($/MT)	12,313.00	-0.38
Aluminum($/MT)	3,476.00	0.19
CPO (RM/tonne)	4,758.50	0.43

Source: Bloomberg, HLBB Global Markets Research
** Closing as of 6 Apr for CPO*

Solid capex for the US before the war

- US business spending was solid before the war with Iran, with the 1.4% m/m fall in durable goods orders largely attributable to a 28.6% m/m plunge in non-defence aircraft orders. Excluding transportation, orders increased more than expected by 0.8% m/m (prior: 0.3% m/m), was broad-based and driven by orders for primary metals, machinery and motor vehicles. Core capital goods (non-def ex air) grew 0.6% m/m (prior: -0.4% m/m), painting a solid capex cycle but outside of defence-related demand, capex will likely take a hit the following month given the tighter financial conditions, elevated uncertainty, higher energy prices and disrupted supply chains.
- Similarly, consumer credit picked up pace for the same month (+$9.5bn vs +$7.7bn), led by non-revolving credit like auto and student loans, while positive consumer spending also supported revolving credit.

Downward revisions to services PMIs for the Eurozone and the UK

- Both the Eurozone's and UK's services PMIs for March were revised lower – Eurozone's to 50.2 (prior: 51.9) and UK's to 50.5 (prior: 53.9). As it is, the services sector has largely slowed with the Middle East war saw both consumers and businesses postponing spending and investment decisions, and business optimism for both economies tumbling to their 9-month low.

Slump in Eurozone's investors post-war

- The Sentix investor confidence index fell sharper than expected to -19.2 in April from -3.1 previously as the economic expectations tumbled with investors recognizing the risk of a 'recession.' Investors sentiment for the German economy also took a severe hit, while the global expectations index plunged to levels last seen in spring 2025.

Strong household spending for Australia

- Household spending held steady at 0.3% m/m in February as both discretionary and non-discretionary spending rose, the former driven by recreational & cultural activities and the latter by food spending. As it is, consumer spending has largely been better than expected and robust, and as such, we are holding on to our view that the RBA will deliver another rate hike in 2Q, albeit with headwind from elevated energy prices and softer consumer confidence on consumer spending for the rest of 2026.

Mixed print for Japan – leading index improved, while household spending faltered

- Data from Japan was mixed. Leading index improved to 112.4 in February from 112.1 previously, but household spending fell more than expected and for the third month by 1.8% m/m in February (prior: -1.0% m/m). Spending on education and transportation and communication drove the contraction, while spending for healthcare increased. The decline came even real wages turned positive (1.9% y/y in Feb vs 0.7% y/y in Jan) and as such, there is also no change in our view that the BOJ will likely hold rates for now and in 2Q, giving BOJ enough leeway to assess the state of consumer spending and fallout from the Iran war.

Malaysia's foreign reserves fell to $126.6bn as at end-March

- Reserves tumbled $1.5bn in 2H of March to end the month at $126.6bn (1H: -$0.2bn to $128.1bn). The reserves level has taken into account the quarterly foreign exchange revaluation changes, is sufficient to finance 4.6 months of imports of goods & services and is 0.9 times of the total short-term external debt.

House View and Forecasts

FX	This Week	2Q-26	3Q-26	4Q-26	1Q-27
DXY	98-102	100.63	99.80	97.96	96.48
EUR/USD	1.14-1.17	1.14	1.15	1.17	1.19
GBP/USD	1.30-1.34	1.31	1.32	1.34	1.35
USD/CHF	0.77-0.82	0.79	0.78	0.76	0.75
USD/JPY	156-162	159	155	152	152
AUD/USD	0.67-0.71	0.68	0.69	0.70	0.71
NZD/USD	0.56-0.59	0.57	0.58	0.58	0.59
USD/CNY	6.86-6.91	6.93	6.88	6.84	6.77
USD/MYR	4.00-4.07	3.98	3.96	3.93	3.90
USD/SGD	1.27-1.30	1.29	1.28	1.27	1.25
USD/THB	32.00-33.50	31.60	31.80	31.80	31.40

FX	Last close	2Q-26	3Q-26	4Q-26	1Q-27
EUR/MYR	4.6596	4.55	4.55	4.60	4.66
GBP/MYR	5.3458	5.23	5.23	5.26	5.28
AUD/MYR	2.7970	2.72	2.72	2.75	2.77
CNY/MYR	0.5873	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58
SGD/MYR	3.1401	3.09	3.10	3.11	3.12

Rates, %	Current	2Q26	3Q26	4Q26	1Q27
Fed	3.50-3.75	3.50-3.75	3.50-3.75	3.25-3.50	3.25-3.50
ECB	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
BOE	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
SNB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
BOJ	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00
RBA	4.10	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35
RBNZ	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25

BNM	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75

Source: HLBB Global Markets Research

Up Next

Date	Events	Prior
8-Apr	HK S&P Global Hong Kong PMI (Mar)	53.3
	NZ RBNZ Official Cash Rate	2.25%
	JN Eco Watchers Survey Outlook SA (Mar)	50
	EC PPI YoY (Feb)	-2.10%
	EC Retail Sales MoM (Feb)	-0.10%
	US MBA Mortgage Applications	-10.5%
	US FOMC Meeting Minutes	
9-Apr	MA Industrial Production YoY (Feb)	5.90%
	MA Manufacturing Sales Value YoY (Feb)	7.10%
	JN Consumer Confidence Index (Mar)	40
	US Personal Income (Feb)	0.40%
	US Personal Spending (Feb)	0.40%
	US Core PCE Price Index YoY (Feb)	3.10%
	US Initial Jobless Claims	202k
	US GDP Annualized QoQ (4Q T)	0.70%
	CH Aggregate Financing CNY YTD (Mar)	9600.0b

Source: Bloomberg

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