

Global FX Trader

Inflating Fears

Our thoughts on USD, JPY, EM carry, EUR, EM FX, ZAR and Positioning

■ **USD: Move fast and break things.** Last week, we argued that pricing 30bp for the next Fed meeting was not a stable equilibrium for markets. Now, after a considerably rocky few days, we are ending in a similar place—and with a similar conclusion ([Exhibit 1](#)). However, the equilibrium is arguably even *more* unstable now. But, we think the balance of risks looks likely to break in the Dollar's favor over the next fortnight. On the one hand, Chair Powell very explicitly said the Fed is willing to speed up the pace in response to hotter data and upward revisions to Q4 2022. This lends some credence to not only pricing a substantial probability of 50bp in March, but also helps justify the changing correlations to economic news over the last month. And, economic data this week continued to show an extremely tight labor market. Job openings have barely budged over the last few months (at least according to JOLTS), and the economy has added over 800k new jobs in the first two months of the year—hardly a sign of pending recession, and seemingly consistent with Powell's assertion that the picture they thought they saw in early February has changed. But, on the other hand, stresses in the domestic banking system are perhaps the first clear sign that policy has become more restrictive, if not disruptive, which has put markets back into limbo. But, we think most paths to resolution should support the Dollar over coming weeks. On the one hand, if the FOMC holds fire because of financial stability concerns, that should ultimately lead to a safe-haven bid for the Dollar. As a corollary, we do not subscribe to the view that the Dollar's depreciation on Friday is a sign that the safe-haven status is not holding; it looks much more consistent with the market treating this mostly as a potential limit on Fed hikes rather than actually pricing increased risk across the system. And on the other hand, if banking pressures improve, or at least do not worsen, over the next couple weeks, then they should have little impact on the FOMC's decision. The most plausible route to a more negative outcome for the Dollar, in our view, would be renewed confirmation that restrictive policy is slowing the economy and lowering inflation—and the banking system stress may be a sign of policy having finally reached clearly restrictive territory, but that may not be evident for some weeks yet.

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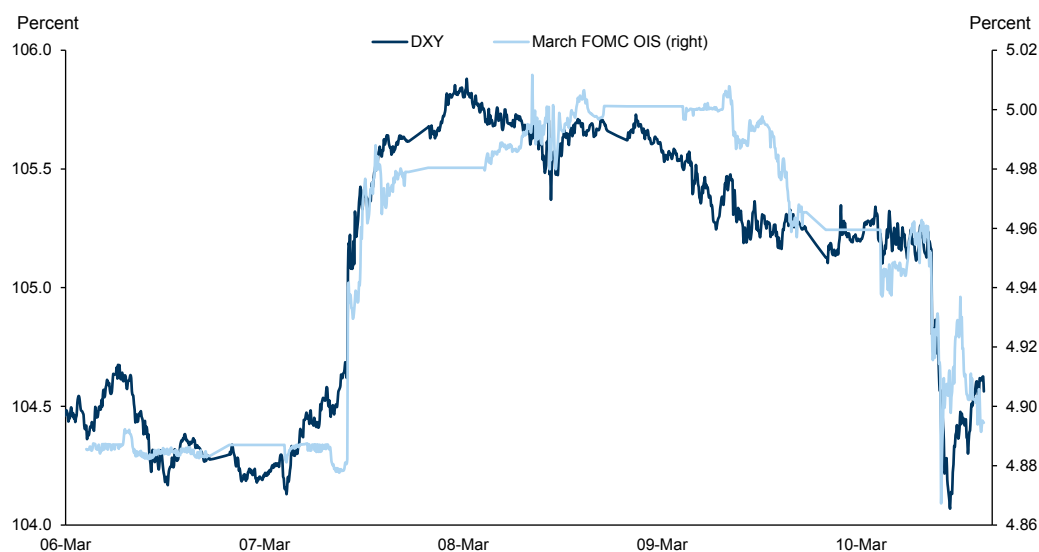
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Exhibit 1: Dollar moves driven by Fed expectations this week

Source: Bloomberg

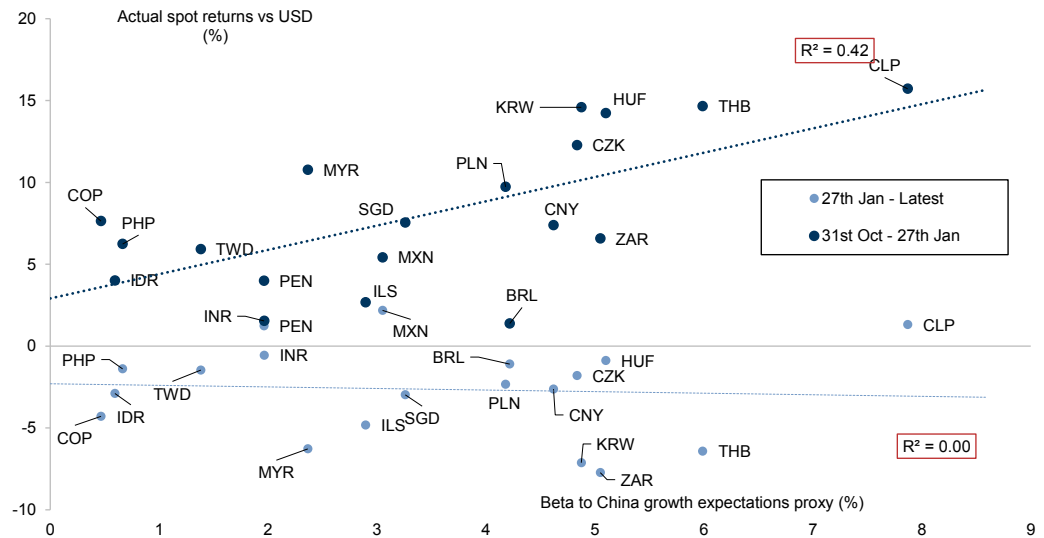
- **JPY: Arigato, next.** The Bank of Japan decided to keep policy on hold at Governor Kuroda's last meeting, as most had expected, seemingly giving the incoming leadership a "free hand" to reassess policy and plan a possible exit from extraordinarily easy policy on its own timeline. While USD/JPY moved up to just below 138 following comments from Fed Chair Powell that opened the door back up to 50bp rate hikes, the cross ended the week down less than a percent, being caught between some widening in the real rate differential and a more significant US equity sell-off of 4%. That said, market speculation of an upcoming shift in BoJ policy will likely increase going into the April meeting (though our economists currently think that a tweak in June looks more probable). This should continue to add some downside pressure to USD/JPY, especially if the initial results of the shunto wage negotiations that are due next week come in relatively strong, as our economists expect. But we have argued that the path of US real rates should matter most for USD/JPY performance, and with Kuroda's last BoJ meeting now in the rear-view mirror and the FOMC meeting on deck, we think that the cross can trade more freely with US growth and policy expectations in the coming weeks. After the volatility of recent sessions, we expect yields to drift higher again as the market re-focuses on the upcoming CPI report that is likely to be firm. That should create room for some renewed JPY weakness ahead of the March FOMC meeting—barring a significant further deterioration in broader risk sentiment.
- **EM carry: On a tight leash.** The ongoing increase in rate volatility means that EM FX will remain highly sensitive to the US data flow and market pricing for the next FOMC meeting. And, after a strong performance year-to-date, EM carry trades are particularly vulnerable, in our view, to a more indiscriminate selloff where market focus shifts to the risks of policy overtightening. In light of this volatile backdrop, we think the resilience of these trades can be increased by either (i) including more defensive currencies like INR, which would reduce the volatility of the portfolio or (ii)

choosing a funder with a similar US rate sensitivity (for example, our EM carry trade recommendation funded out of the Euro remained resilient to the broad USD move following Powell's testimony on Tuesday). Still, even with these considerations, we think EM carry trades that have performed well YTD should be kept on a tight leash over the next couple of weeks and so we have also been tightening stops for our preferred EM FX carry trade recommendations (long MXN, BRL & HUF vs EUR). To be sure, we think the key risk for a currency like MXN is not necessarily US rates moving higher (which the Peso has been able to digest for the most part), but rather a deterioration in broader risk sentiment emerging from signs of stress in the US economy, as we saw in June-July 2022. And after a period where the Mexican Peso has experienced 'too much love' as we argued last week, as long as sensitivity to activity and policy in core markets remains heightened, the more idiosyncratic behaviour of Brazilian local markets makes for a better long (and we continue to recommend that investors receive BRL Jan 29 DI, initiated earlier this week).

- **EUR: Setting the bar.** While the Fed is undecided over going back to 50bp, the ECB has been unequivocal—they are sticking to that pace at least for this meeting, and possibly for a while longer. And the Euro area stands out because, given more persistent inflation pressures and the elevated pace of nominal growth, the economy likely requires and can withstand faster hikes. There are not many other economies that can match the Fed's higher aim (and possibly faster pace) as well as the Euro area right now. For this reason, we think the Euro can still be somewhat resilient in a more indiscriminate period of Dollar appreciation, and EUR looks well-positioned to move higher on crosses in coming weeks (such as against SEK and GBP). Our 3m forecast for EUR/USD remains 1.02 but, now that the market has mostly corrected for an over-exuberant January, achieving this forecast will likely also require some disappointment on the EUR leg. While this looks unlikely to happen soon, we continue to see a number of "execution risks" for Europe in coming months, including our commodity teams' expectation that natural gas prices will start to rise and ultimately more than double from now through the summer.
- **EM FX: China Reopening vs US Rate Volatility.** Between November and January, EM currencies benefited from a better growth-inflation mix, where the earlier-than-expected China reopening was a key contributor to the improving cyclical picture and a key driver of cross EM FX performance (Exhibit 1). However, since then, with the Dollar moving stronger, the cross-section of EM currencies has increasingly reflected their sensitivity to US rates as policy hawkishness has re-emerged. Given our economists' above-consensus forecast for 2023 China growth and a continued recovery in high-frequency data, we think there is still upside in China-sensitive EM currencies. And our recent in-depth analysis suggests that KRW and THB are the clearest expressions of China-related optimism, whereas domestic growth risks make ZAR a less reliable proxy than in the past. Still, the prospect for US rates to stay "higher for longer" may require investors to keep an eye out for the sensitivity of EM currencies to US rate moves too: for instance, EM FX investors can pair China-sensitive EM FX longs with shorts in currencies with a similar US rate sensitivity (for example, CLP longs can become more US rate resilient with a GBP short in this simple framework). Alternatively, the Brazilian Real

stands out for featuring a combination of China growth exposure and US rate resiliency.

Exhibit 2: While FX sensitivities to China growth expectations explained a large part of the cross EM FX performance between November and January, this has not been the case since



X-axis displays the estimated beta of each currency to our market-based proxy of Chinese growth expectations, controlling for shifts in the S&P Index, oil prices and US 10-year real yields.

Source: Bloomberg, Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

- **ZAR: A tough domestic backdrop.** In mid-February, we noted that the South African Rand had been trading more idiosyncratically and there was room for further underperformance relative to other EM currencies on the back of downside risks to domestic growth. And while USD/ZAR has traded lower in the last couple of sessions, potentially reflecting light positioning after a very challenging start to 2023, as well as the potential for the Rand to respond to an extension of China's reopening impulse, we think the domestic thesis for Rand underperformance remains. For one, the effects of power cuts are now starting to become visible as the sharper-than-expected contraction in 2022Q4 GDP suggests, with our economists now expecting 2023 GDP growth at only 0.2%. At the same time, the current account deficit widened sharply in Q4, driven by the goods trade balance (and weak export volumes specifically), which could offset the tailwind from increased Chinese commodity demand. And, more structurally, we think the ongoing changes in the portfolio flow picture imply there is an increasing role for more discretionary locally driven capital outflows. With South Africa heading into the winter months, the seasonal increase in electricity demand may lead to an intensification of power cuts, which would weigh on both economic growth and on locally driven capital flows. This would lead, in our view, to a weaker and a more idiosyncratic Rand over the near-term.
- **G10 Positioning: More balanced (probably).** Markets are pricing an unsteady equilibrium for the next Fed meeting, and given the packed calendar period, event risk is clearly elevated. In markets like these, positioning can play a crucial role.

While our typical measures of FX market positioning have been unavailable through the CFTC, we have been able to turn to price-based estimates, which suggest that Dollar positioning turned more balanced in February. USD built up a significant overweight into the end of 2022, after which optimism about US disinflation pushed Dollar positioning to a trough sometime early this year. In February however, the market narrative shifted and, since that shift, our price-based measures of USD positioning, including risk reversals and USD sensitivities to data surprises, suggest that positioning has turned more even against the G10. Depending on skew of the data over the coming weeks, more balanced positioning in the Dollar could suggest more symmetric sensitivities to data surprises.

Global FX Forecasts

	Current Spot	3-Month Horizon		6-Month Horizon		12-Month Horizon		Longer-term Forecasts (eop)		
		Forward	Forecast	Forward	Forecast	Forward	Forecast	2024	2025	2026
G10										
EUR/\$	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.07	1.02	1.08	1.10	1.15	1.15	1.15
£/\$	1.19	1.20	1.15	1.20	1.15	1.20	1.22	1.28	1.35	1.34
AUD/\$	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.68	0.67	0.71	0.73	0.75	0.80
NZD/\$	0.61	0.61	0.60	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.64	0.65	0.67	0.70
\$/CAD	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.34	1.37	1.28	1.28	1.23	1.20
\$/CHF	0.93	0.92	0.94	0.91	0.92	0.90	0.84	0.80	0.80	0.80
\$/NOK	10.66	10.61	10.59	10.56	10.69	10.48	10.00	9.39	8.87	8.35
\$/SEK	10.75	10.70	10.98	10.65	10.88	10.57	9.77	9.35	9.04	8.70
\$/JPY	136	134	132	132	125	129	125	125	115	105
EMEA										
\$/CZK	22.3	22.4	23.3	22.5	23.5	22.5	22.3	21.7	22.6	23.5
\$/HUF	362	372	368	380	363	392	336	339	330	322
\$/PLN	4.43	4.46	4.56	4.47	4.51	4.51	4.18	4.04	4.00	3.96
\$/RON	4.64	4.66	4.85	4.67	4.85	4.70	4.55	4.39	4.43	4.48
\$/RUB	78.74	78.74	75.00	81.64	80.00	86.61	85.00	85.00	85.00	85.00
\$/UAH	36.9	39.8	36.6	43.0	42.0	45.9	50.0	52.5	55.0	57.5
\$/TRY	18.81	19.88	19.00	21.28	21.00	24.16	22.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
\$/ILS	3.61	3.59	3.50	3.57	3.50	3.54	3.40	3.35	3.30	3.30
\$/ZAR	18.57	18.71	18.50	18.82	18.00	19.04	17.75	16.00	15.00	14.00
\$/NGN	461	499	500	561	550	690	600	700	700	700
Americas										
\$/ARS	200	243	230	299	260	434	340	500	700	900
\$/BRL	5.17	5.25	4.90	5.33	4.85	5.46	4.80	4.85	4.75	4.60
\$/MXN	18.36	18.67	18.75	18.99	18.50	19.60	18.25	19.00	19.00	19.00
\$/CLP	796	806	775	815	775	826	770	800	775	750
\$/PEN	3.78	3.80	3.90	3.82	3.90	3.85	3.80	3.75	3.65	3.55
\$/COP	4778	4837	5000	4925	4900	5104	4600	4300	4000	3700
Asia										
\$/CNY	6.97	6.92	6.80	6.88	6.70	6.79	6.50	6.70	6.50	6.40
\$/HKD	7.85	7.83	7.80	7.81	7.80	7.78	7.80	7.80	7.80	7.80
\$/INR	81.98	82.55	83.00	82.97	82.00	83.86	82.00	80.00	79.00	78.00
\$/KRW	1322	1316	1250	1308	1230	1293	1220	1200	1180	1150
\$/MYR	4.52	4.49	4.30	4.46	4.25	4.40	4.20	4.40	4.30	4.20
\$/SGD	1.35	1.35	1.34	1.34	1.33	1.33	1.30	1.29	1.27	1.25
\$/TWD	30.8	30.6	30.5	30.3	30.0	29.6	30.0	31.0	30.0	29.0
\$/THB	35.05	34.76	33.50	34.43	32.50	33.78	32.00	34.00	34.00	34.00
\$/IDR	15425	15500	15500	15530	15300	15590	15000	14500	14400	14200
\$/PHP	55.24	55.37	56.00	55.46	55.50	55.69	55.00	55.00	58.00	58.00
Euro Crosses										
EUR/GBP	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.85	0.86
EUR/CHF	0.99	0.98	0.96	0.98	0.94	0.97	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92
EUR/NOK	11.28	11.29	10.80	11.29	10.90	11.30	11.00	10.80	10.20	9.60
EUR/SEK	11.37	11.38	11.20	11.39	11.10	11.40	10.75	10.75	10.40	10.00
EUR/CZK	23.60	23.84	23.75	24.02	24.00	24.27	24.50	25.00	26.00	27.00
EUR/HUF	383	396	375	406	370	423	370	390	380	370
EUR/PLN	4.69	4.74	4.65	4.78	4.60	4.86	4.60	4.65	4.60	4.55
EUR/RON	4.91	4.96	4.95	4.99	4.95	5.07	5.00	5.05	5.10	5.15
EUR/RUB	83.3	83.8	76.5	87.3	81.6	93.4	93.5	93.5	97.8	97.8

Note: Spot values are as of Thursday's close.

See dynamic table here (or click image above): <https://publishing.gs.com/content/themes/fx-forecasts.html>

Source: Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

Return Forecasts & Valuations

	Current Spot	Forecast: 12-Month Return (%)				GSDEER			GSFEER			Average Estimate	PPP*
		Spot	Carry	Total	NEER	Estimate	Misalignment		Estimate	Misalignment			
							Bilateral	Trade-Weighted		Bilateral	Trade-Weighted		
G10													
EUR/\$	1.07	4.0	-1.9	2.0	-0.8	1.20	-11%	5%	1.23	-13%	1%	1.21	1.46
GBP/\$	1.19	2.5	-0.8	1.6	-0.6	1.30	-8%	9%	1.31	-9%	7%	1.30	1.41
AUD/\$	0.66	7.7	-1.5	6.2	2.0	0.90	-27%	-12%	0.82	-19%	-8%	0.87	0.67
NZD/\$	0.61	4.9	0.1	5.1	-0.4	0.69	-11%	6%	0.77	-21%	-10%	0.72	0.69
\$/CAD	1.38	8.0	-0.8	7.1	6.3	1.21	-13%	-8%	1.29	-6%	-1%	1.24	1.25
\$/CHF	0.93	11.5	-3.6	7.5	8.7	0.94	1%	17%	0.85	-9%	3%	0.91	1.02
\$/NOK	10.66	6.6	-1.7	4.8	2.6	5.60	-48%	-38%	7.22	-32%	-22%	6.25	10.79
\$/SEK	10.75	10.0	-1.7	8.1	6.5	6.75	-37%	-24%	8.43	-22%	-4%	7.42	9.16
\$/JPY	136	8.9	-5.6	2.8	4.4	97	-29%	-18%	117	-14%	-4%	105	88
EMEA													
\$/CZK	22.2	0.1	0.9	1.0	-3.5	25.9	17%	35%	22.5	2%	16%	24.6	17.3
\$/HUF	362	7.7	8.2	16.5	4.8	309	-15%	-1%	360	-1%	16%	330	215
\$/PLN	4.43	6.0	1.7	7.8	3.4	3.63	-18%	-5%	4.0	-10%	5%	3.77	2.86
\$/RON	4.64	2.2	1.3	3.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
\$/RUB	78.74	-7.4	10.0	1.9	-10.6	65.67	-17%	3%	54.87	-30%	-15%	61.35	52.07
\$/UAH	36.9	-26.1	24.3	-1.8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
\$/TRY	18.81	-14.5	28.4	9.8	-16.7	9.16	-51%	-45%	16.15	-14%	5%	11.95	8.88
\$/ILS	3.61	6.1	-1.9	4.0	3.6	3.54	-2%	13%	2.93	-19%	-10%	3.30	4.26
\$/ZAR	18.57	4.6	2.5	7.3	4.9	10.73	-42%	-35%	15.4	-17%	0%	12.60	15.93
\$/NGN	461	-23.2	49.8	26.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Americas													
\$/ARS	200.4	-41.1	116.9	75.8	-31.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
\$/BRL	5.17	7.6	5.7	13.7	5.4	3.84	-26%	-13%	5.21	1%	13%	4.39	5.57
\$/MXN	18.36	0.6	6.8	7.4	-1.5	19.22	5%	11%	19.78	8%	12%	19.44	18.77
\$/CLP	796	3.3	3.8	7.3	0.1	640	-20%	-5%	856	8%	13%	726	805
\$/PEN	3.78	-0.4	1.8	1.3	-3.3	3.06	-19%	-7%	4.40	16%	24%	3.60	4.14
\$/COP	4778	3.9	6.8	11.0	1.5	2774	-42%	-33%	4495	-6%	3%	3462	2980
Asia													
\$/CNY	6.97	7.2	-2.5	4.4	3.1	5.17	-26%	-15%	6.38	-8%	5%	5.65	7.56
\$/HKD	7.85	0.6	-0.8	-0.2	-4.9	7.35	-6%	15%	8.06	3%	12%	7.64	5.53
\$/INR	81.98	0.0	2.3	2.3	-3.5	75.07	-8%	4%	78.80	-4%	14%	76.56	73.78
\$/KRW	1322	8.4	-2.2	6.0	3.9	1237	-6%	13%	1270	-4%	9%	1250	950
\$/MYR	4.52	7.6	-2.7	4.7	2.4	3.23	-29%	-16%	4.25	-6%	4%	3.64	2.31
\$/SGD	1.35	4.1	-1.7	2.3	-0.8	1.37	1%	18%	1.42	5%	17%	1.39	0.61
\$/TWD	30.8	2.7	-4.0	-1.4	-2.6	27.0	-12%	6%	27.9	-10%	0%	27.4	14.8
\$/THB	35.05	9.5	-3.6	5.6	4.3	33.27	-5%	13%	35.45	1%	14%	34.14	21.82
\$/IDR	15425	2.8	1.1	3.9	-2.3	14256	-8%	9%	13456	-13%	-3%	13936	11074
\$/PHP	55.24	0.4	0.8	1.3	-4.6	57.21	4%	22%	68.38	24%	29%	61.68	51.90
Euro Crosses													
EUR/GBP	0.89	-1.4	1.1	-0.3	-0.6	0.93	4%	9%	0.94	6%	7%	0.93	1.03
EUR/CHF	0.99	7.3	-1.7	5.6	8.7	1.14	15%	17%	1.04	6%	3%	1.10	1.48
EUR/NOK	11.28	2.6	0.2	2.7	2.6	6.74	-40%	-38%	8.87	-21%	-22%	7.59	15.73
EUR/SEK	11.37	5.8	0.2	6.0	6.5	8.13	-29%	-24%	10.35	-9%	-4%	9.02	13.36
EUR/CZK	23.60	-3.7	10.1	6.4	-3.5	31.20	32%	35%	27.68	17%	16%	29.79	25.30
EUR/HUF	383	3.6	10.1	13.7	4.8	373	-3%	-1%	442	15%	16%	401	313
EUR/PLN	4.69	2.0	3.6	5.5	3.4	4.37	-7%	-5%	4.9	4%	5%	4.58	4.18
EUR/RON	4.91	-1.7	3.2	1.4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
EUR/RUB	83.3	-10.9	11.9	1.0	-10.6	79.1	-5%	3%	67.4	-19%	-15%	74.4	--
Addendum													
USD	--	-4.0	-1.4	-5.2	-5.0	--	--	17%	--	--	9%	--	--

Note: USD returns average of all other currencies (except ARS, NGN and UAH) with opposite sign; *EM estimates adjusted for per capita income. Spot values as of Thursday.

See dynamic table here (or click image above): <https://publishing.gs.com/content/themes/table.html?criteriaKey=1k2HGqgS2h>

Source: Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

Disclosure Appendix

Reg AC

We, Kamakshya Trivedi, Danny Suwanpruti, Michael Cahill, Davide Crosilla, Karen Reichgott Fishman, Ian Tomb, Teresa Alves, Sid Bhushan and Isabella Rosenberg, hereby certify that all of the views expressed in this report accurately reflect our personal views, which have not been influenced by considerations of the firm's business or client relationships.

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