

EMERGING MARKETS BENEFIT ATTENDEES IN LONDON RAISE MONEY TO A SAMBA BEAT

800 Emerging Markets professionals attended one of the largest industry benefits ever in London on Thursday, October 2, 2003. The net profits from the evening will be distributed to three charities, including organizations working with street children in Brazil and AIDS orphans in South Africa.

The event was held at the Old Billingsgate Market on the Thames, a 19th Century listed building which offered an unobstructed view of Tower Bridge to the many foreign visitors (including a large Russian contingent) in attendance. The evening's theme was Brazil, and a Carnival-like energy filled the evening. Batacada, a Brazilian drumming troupe which merges a traditional samba beat with new fusion, was brought over from Paris for the event, while Viramundo provided the evening with additional music and dancers. Both groups ensured that the dance floor was at maximum decibels and overflow capacity for the bulk of the evening.

Mark Franklin (Citigroup Investments) revealed yet again that he is a man of many talents, when he auctioned off a number of unique prizes, including stays at holiday homes in Scotland, Switzerland and St. Lucia, as well as the opportunity to literally create one's own wine at a French vineyard. Some items even attracted telephone bids from New York professionals unable to attend in person. The bidding got into a frenzy when a holiday to Rio de Janeiro went on the block; it finally sold for £13,000. A silent auction which included a day's use of a fully-crewed sailboat, use of a vacation home in France and Chelsea vs. Manchester United tickets also raised funds for the charities. Kelly Shea of Julius Baer proved to be the undisputed casino queen in one of the other activities of the evening.

Event organizers included Brigitte Dowsett and Clare Turnbull of Bear Stearns, Simon Treacher of BlueBay Asset Management, Elaine Skinner and Paul Charman of West LB, and Jonathan Murno of EMTA. The group planned the entire event, a smashing success by any measure, in a record twelve weeks.

Organizers noted that the EM debt community in London had "really stepped up to the plate," volunteering their time, assistance and some of the evening's supplies. One of the most generous gifts was from former EMTA Board Member Alex Mcleod, who donated 500 bottles of wine to the event, while Unibanco picked up the cost of the Brazilian bands. A number of restaurants, travel agents and other companies also pitched in with prizes.

The Emerging Markets debt community in New York will be holding its own charity bash on Thursday, December 4, and the two groups have been informally trading ideas. A London event organizer couldn't help but point out that one of the auction items fetched almost three times the price paid in New York last year when it was auctioned off last week in London, apparently throwing the gauntlet down to the New York trading and investment community!