# **SARASIN RESPONSIBLE** GLOBAL EQUITY

# SARASIN & PARTNERS

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#### **ECONOMIC REVIEW**

Global markets performed well in the early part of the month. A promising US employment report and other positive economic releases reassured investors that the world's largest economy is not experiencing a sudden downturn. This sentiment was reinforced by the potential for reduced trade barriers between the US and China.

Against this backdrop, the S&P 500 Index posted its largest monthly gain in 18 months. Emerging market equities also delivered positive returns during the month.

### **FUND REVIEW**

Software giant Microsoft contributed to the fund's performance. The firm reported robust quarterly results, with growth in its cloud computing division significantly exceeding investor expectations. The firm's management said it expects continued strong future growth, which boosted investor sentiment.

London Stock Exchange Group detracted from the fund's performance. The financial data and analytics specialist announced disappointing quarterly results that showed weaker-thanexpected subscription-based revenue growth. However, strength in the company's one-off revenues suggests it continues to have upbeat growth prospects. We feel the stock's recent decline will prove to be temporary and remain confident in its long-term outlook.

#### **FUND TRANSACTIONS**

During the month, we exited a holding in smart infrastructure company Siemens. We believe the firm's growth prospects are being overshadowed by the expected divestment of its Siemens Healthineers stake, which is due to take place in December. We also sold laboratory supplies specialist Thermo Fisher Scientific. The company faces a weakening US healthcare outlook, including policy-driven funding cuts and declining drug approval rates. These headwinds could weigh on the firm's performance as a key supplier to the sector.

We purchased Marsh McLennan, which is the world's largest insurance broker. The company generates around 60% of its revenue from brokering insurance contracts, thereby earning fees or commissions without assuming credit risk. The remaining 40% of its sales are derived from its consulting businesses, Mercer and Oliver Wyman. We believe that investors currently underappreciate Marsh McLennan's ability to grow its revenue both organically and through acquisitions.

We reinvested the proceeds from the aforementioned sale of Siemens into European industrial company Schneider Electric. We believe the latter stock is mispriced due to investor overreaction to the firm's recent results, which created an attractive buying opportunity.

### OUTLOOK

Markets face continued uncertainty as trade tariff negotiations grind on and geopolitical tensions persist. President Trump's 'America First' agenda is causing global economic momentum to stall and fragment, placing markets at a pivotal point. The end of US-led rules-based global governance is leaving countries feeling vulnerable and focused on increasing their security spending.

We continue to focus on high-quality companies with sensible balance sheets that are regular dividend payers. They should provide a degree of downside protection amid volatile markets.





#### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

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There is no minimum investment period, though we would recommend that you view your investment as a medium to long term one (i.e. 5 to 10 years).

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Frequent political and social unrest in Emerging Markets and the high inflation and interest rates this tends to encourage, may lead to sharp swings in foreign currency markets and stock markets. There is also an inherent risk in the smaller size of many Emerging Markets, especially since this means restricted liquidity. Further risks to consider are restrictions on foreigners making currency transactions or investments.

The Fund may invest in derivatives for efficient portfolio management purposes. This means Derivatives can only be used to manage the Fund more efficiently in an attempt to reduce the overall risk of its investments, reduce the costs of investing or generate additional capital or income, although this may not be achieved and may create losses greater than the cost of the derivative.

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