

Mergers & Acquisitions Report

Covering M&A, distressed situations and other corporate restructurings

PUBLISHED BY SOURCEMEDIA, INC.

WWW.MAREPORT.COM

VOL. 18, No. 37 • OCTOBER 3, 2005

LEGAL ADVISORS ANGLE

Sheppard Mullin Boosts Latin American M&A Practice

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP is looking to engage in more international M&A transactions, particularly in Latin America. Several attorneys in the firm's Latino business practice told *Mergers & Acquisitions Report* last week that Sheppard Mullin is growing the division and expects to advise on more Latin American deals in a variety of industries.

Juan Trujillo, who joined the firm's New York office as a partner in both the bankruptcy and financing and Latino business groups on Sept. 19, is no stranger to cross-border M&A in Latin America. One of his past clients was **Compania Minera del Sur SA**, a Bolivian mining company taken out by Swiss commodities trader **Glencore International AG** in February for an undisclosed price.

During a conference call with *M&AR*, Trujillo, who was brought on board from **Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP** to help expand Sheppard Mullin's Latino group, said he expects more M&A from Mexico and Brazil, the Latin American countries with the strongest emerging markets.

Jerry Gumpel, the head of Sheppard Mullin's international practice, which also includes Korean and Chinese business groups, explained why the firm is prepared for more Brazilian and Mexican clients.

"They're the largest and most stable economies in Latin America, so there's a lot of foreign interest now," he said. "Mexico has a real estate industry that's booming, and their currency has been pretty stable. All of this has fed investor confidence."

Rebeca Perez-Serrano, a senior associate in the Latino practice who was also on the call, added that easier access to credit in those countries has increased U.S. investor interest.

In addition to real estate, Trujillo and Gumpel said more Latin American clients are coming from the transportation, mining, telecommunications and energy sectors. Trujillo mentioned that he is currently advising an operator of Mexican airports in a transaction. He declined to give details.

Gumpel said the Hispanic business group is also looking to take on clients who serve Latino communities in the U.S. The firm recently advised Los Angeles-based **La Curacao**, a privately held discount department store operator targeting Latino immigrants, on the sale of a minority stake to **Citigroup Venture Capital International**, which closed on Aug. 15. The terms of the deal were not disclosed. **Larry Braun** was the lead Sheppard Mullin attorney advising La Curacao.—*J.H.*