

August 21, 2012

Stock Markets Rap

	Close	Chg	(%)
MSCI World	1,289.75	-0.5	-0.0%
Dow	13,271.64	-0.0	-0.0%
Nasdaq	3,076.21	-0.4	-0.0%
S&P 500	1,418.13	-0.0	0.1%
Euro Stoxx	3,042.06	3.2	0.1%
FTSE 100	9,146.59	-37.6	-0.4%
DAX	8,680.26	7.3	0.1%
CAC	4,295.38	-1.6	-0.0%
ASX 200	4,544.53	32.7	0.7%
Nikkei	115.51	0.3	0.3%
Shanghai	331.27	-1.3	-0.4%
Hang Seng	2,591.66	-1.7	-0.1%
H Shares	1,262.66	-4.8	-0.4%
	Close	Chg	(%)
FTSE ASEAN	575.78	0.0	0.0%
Singapore	2,442.85	-8.4	-0.3%
Thailand	1,188.62	1.0	0.1%
Malaysia	1,649.79	-0.3	-0.0%
Indonesia	4,160.51	18.5	0.4%
Philippines	5,206.81	-12.7	-0.2%
Vietnam	437.28	3.8	0.9%
Lao PDR	1,052.02	17.3	1.7%
Cambodia	698.92	-5.4	-0.8%

Currencies Rap

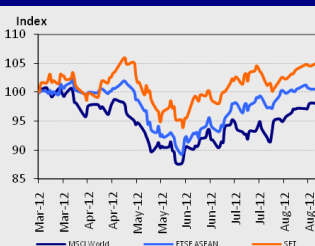
	Last	Chg	(%)
DX	82.46	-0.1	-0.2%
USD/EUR	1.23	-0.0	-0.1%
JPY/USD	79.53	-0.0	-0.0%
THB/USD	31.51	0.0	0.0%
VND/USD	20,845.00	7.0	0.0%
LAK/USD	8,034.25	17.3	0.2%
KHR/USD	4,045.00	-6.9	-0.2%
MMK/USD	875.88	7.3	0.8%
VND/THB	661.54	0.2	0.0%
LAK/THB	254.98	0.6	0.2%
KHR/THB	661.54	0.2	0.0%
MMK/THB	27.80	0.2	0.9%

Commodities Rap

	Close	Chg	(%)
Gold	1,615.92	-0.48	-0.0%
Silver	28.13	0.04	0.2%
Copper	3.38	-0.05	-1.4%
WTI	95.97	-0.04	-0.0%
Brent	113.70	-0.01	-0.0%
BDI	711.00	-3.00	-0.4%

World, ASEAN, SET

Relative Performance



MACRO NEWS

- EU: Bundesbank Steps Up ECB Bond Plan Criticism; Rift Widens
- US: Food Crisis? Not Yet, Say IMF, World Bank

CORPORATE NEWS

- Apple [AAPL: US] - Apple Reaches Record U.S. Market Value on iPhone Optimism
- General Motor [GM: US] - GM to recall 249,260 midsize SUVs for fire hazard

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MACRO NEWS**Bundesbank Steps Up ECB Bond Plan Criticism; Rift Widens**

Germany's Bundesbank stepped up its criticism of the European Central Bank's plan to embark on potentially "unlimited" government bond purchases, widening a rift over how to tackle the sovereign debt crisis. "The Bundesbank holds to the opinion that government bond purchases by the Eurosystem are to be seen critically and entail significant stability risks," the Frankfurt-based central bank said in its monthly report today. The new program "could be unlimited" and decisions about potentially far greater sharing of solvency risks should be taken by governments or parliaments, not by central banks, it said. The comments suggest Bundesbank President Jens Weidmann won't support a measure the ECB is rushing to design to help reduce governments' borrowing costs and win them time to implement fiscal reforms. Spanish and Italian 10-year bond yields slid to the lowest in more than six weeks today after German news magazine Der Spiegel reported the ECB's new program may set yield caps. In response, the ECB issued a statement saying it's "misleading to report on decisions which have not yet been taken." [Bloomberg]

Food Crisis? Not Yet, Say IMF, World Bank

Global financial lenders are advising countries to prepare for the possibility of higher food bills in the coming months, but for the moment the International Monetary Fund and World Bank see few signs of a widespread food price crisis like in 2007/08. The worst drought in half a century in the United States and poor crops from the Black Sea bread basket have lifted prices of corn, wheat and soybeans. The price of rice — a staple food in Asia and parts of Africa — has so far been unaffected. "We are not saying that we anticipate a major crisis at this point," said Juergen Voegelé, director of the World Bank's Agriculture and Rural Development Department. "The world has enough food, but of course we cannot predict the weather and if something extraordinary happens we might find ourselves in a difficult situation again." World Bank data shows that overall food costs are higher but not yet at record levels of 2007/08, which pushed millions into poverty as food prices rose across the board in tandem with sky-rocketing oil prices. The effects of the twin crisis in 2008 dissipated as the global financial crisis intensified and demand slowed. "Our recommendation is that countries prepare very early on," Voegelé said. "As long as our food stocks are so low, (price) volatility will not go away easily." [CNBC]

CORPORATE NEWS**Apple Reaches Record U.S. Market Value on iPhone Optimism**

Apple Inc. (AAPL) set a U.S. record for market value, surpassing the high mark reached by Microsoft Corp. (MSFT) during the Internet heyday, on optimism the next version of the iPhone will meet high demand. The shares of Cupertino, California-based Apple rose 2.6 percent to \$665.15 at the close in New York, for a market value of \$623.5 billion. That overtook Microsoft's \$616.3 billion closing market capitalization on Dec. 27, 1999, according to data compiled by S&P Dow Jones Indices. Apple is preparing to introduce the next version of the iPhone on Sept. 12 in what will be a design overhaul of its top-selling product, two people with knowledge of the company's plans said last month. The next iPhone "could be the most impactful product upgrade in Apple's history" and the company will probably sell as many as 250 million units over the life of the device, according to analysts at FBR Capital Markets. "With the iPhone they have successfully created a strong customer following in an absolutely enormous marketplace," said Toni Sacconaghi, an analyst with Sanford C. Bernstein & Co., in an interview. "They have captured the hearts and minds of consumers." Apple gets about 70 percent of its profit from the iPhone, Sacconaghi said. The company's stock has risen an average of 11 percent in the two months before previous iPhone updates have been released, he said. The new iPhone will have a larger screen and thinner body, and is expected to work with faster, long-term evolution wireless networks being introduced by carriers such as Verizon Wireless and AT&T Inc. (T), according to analysts including Piper Jaffray Cos. (PJC)' Gene Munster. [Bloomberg]

GM to recall 249,260 midsize SUVs for fire hazard

General Motors Co will recall 249,260 midsize sport utility vehicles to correct a potential fire hazard, a U.S. government safety agency said. GM, in a filing with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said the recall affected 2006-2007 Chevrolet Trailblazer and GMC Envoy SUVs, as well as certain 2006-2007 Buick Rainier, Saab 9-7X and Isuzu Ascender SUVs. A possible electrical short could affect power windows and door locks, and in some cases could cause a fire, GM said in its August 17 letter to the NHTSA that was posted on the agency's website. The recall involves vehicles sold or currently registered mainly in the Northeast and Midwest states, including Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia. "Fluid may enter the driver's door module, causing corrosion that could result in a short in the circuit board. A short may cause the power door lock and power window switches to function intermittently or become inoperative. The short may also cause overheating, which could melt components of the door module, producing odor, smoke or a fire," the NHTSA said. GM dealers will replace the driver's master power window switch on Chevrolet, GMC and Buick models. Saab and Isuzu owners can call the manufacturers' customer service centers or the NHTSA safety hotline. [Reuters]