

Ferragamo reiterates needs stable markets for IPO

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MILAN, Nov 25 (Reuters) - Italy's **Salvatore Ferragamo** reiterated on Tuesday markets needed to stabilise for the luxury goods brand to work on a bourse listing and the financial crisis would not hurt its programme to open new stores. Florence-based Ferragamo, known for its silk ties, handbags, scarves and shoes, has been monitoring market conditions for a planned initial public offering (IPO).

"No decision has been taken on 2009," Ferragamo Chief Executive Michele Norsa told reporters on the sidelines of the **Milan Global Fashion Summit**.

"(Work on an IPO) is possible if there is a substantial improvement in the markets, but market valuations need to stabilise, not just pick up. We are, however, ready to act."

In the summer, Chairman Ferruccio Ferragamo said the family, which owns the group founded by fashion designer Salvatore Ferragamo, was united in supporting the proposed placing of a minority stake on the market through an IPO but would wait.

"I don't think (there are alternatives to an IPO). The shareholders haven't told me anything," Norsa said. He said the global financial crisis was not hurting Ferragamo's new store openings programme. "Every year, we open 40-45 stores, at most there may be a slight reduction," he said.

He said there was no visibility yet for next year. "The last quarter in 2009 will surely pick up, also because it will be compared to the last quarter in 2008," he said. "There are doubts for the third quarter in 2009," he added.

(Reporting by Cristina Carlevaro; editing by Elaine Hardcastle)