

GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC
Form FWP
December 21, 2018

January 2019

Free Writing Prospectus pursuant to Rule 433 dated December 21, 2018 / Registration Statement
No. 333-219206

STRUCTURED INVESTMENTS

Opportunities in International Equities

GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024

The Market-Linked Notes do not bear interest and are unsecured notes issued by GS Finance Corp. and guaranteed by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. The amount that you will be paid on your notes on the stated maturity date (expected to be February 5, 2024) is based on the performance of the EURO STOXX 50® Index as measured from the pricing date (expected to be January 31, 2019) to and including the valuation date (expected to be January 31, 2024).

At maturity, if the final index value (the index closing value on the valuation date) is *greater than* the initial index value (set on the pricing date), the return on your notes will be positive and equal to the *product* of the leverage factor of 200% *multiplied* by the index percent change (the percentage change in the final index value from the initial index value). If the final index value is equal to or less than the initial index value, you will receive the stated principal amount of your investment.

At maturity, for each \$10 principal amount of your notes, you will receive an amount in cash equal to:

- if the final index value is *greater than* the initial index value, the *sum* of (i) \$10 *plus* (ii) the *product* of (a) \$10 *times* (b) 2 *times* (c) the index percent change; or
- if the final index value is *equal to or less than* the initial index value, \$10.

The notes are for investors who are willing to forgo interest payments for the potential to earn 200% of any positive return of the index, without participating in the negative return of the index.

SUMMARY TERMS (continued on page PS-2)

| | |
|--|---|
| Issuer / Guarantor: | GS Finance Corp. / The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. |
| Underlying index: | EURO STOXX 50® Index (Bloomberg symbol, SX5E Index) |
| Pricing date: | January , 2019 (expected to price on or about January 31, 2019) |
| Original issue date: | February , 2019 (expected to be February 5, 2019) |
| Valuation date: | expected to be January 31, 2024, subject to postponement |
| Stated maturity date: | expected to be February 5, 2024 |
| Stated principal amount/Original issue price: | \$10 per note / 100% of the principal amount |
| Estimated value range: | \$9.10 to \$9.40. See page PS-2 for more information. |

Your investment in the notes involves certain risks, including the credit risk of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. See page PS-9. You should read the disclosure herein to better understand the terms and risks of your investment.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Original issue date: | February , 2019 | Original issue price: | 100.00% of the principal amount |
| Underwriting discount: | 3.85% (\$ total)* | Net proceeds to the issuer: | 96.15% (\$ in total)* |

*Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, acting as dealer for the offering, will receive a selling concession of \$0.35 for each note it sells. It has informed us that it intends to internally allocate \$0.05 of the selling concession for each note as a structuring fee. Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC will receive an underwriting discount of \$0.035 for each note.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any other regulatory body has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the accuracy or adequacy of this document, the accompanying general terms supplement, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The notes are not bank deposits and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency, nor are they obligations of, or guaranteed by, a bank.

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC

The issue price, underwriting discount and net proceeds listed on the cover page relate to the notes we sell initially. We may decide to sell additional notes after the date of this document, at issue prices and with underwriting discounts and net proceeds that differ from the amounts set forth above. The return (whether positive or negative) on your investment in notes will depend in part on the issue price you pay for such notes.

GS Finance Corp. may use this document in the initial sale of the notes. In addition, Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC or any other affiliate of GS Finance Corp. may use this document in a market-making transaction in a note after its initial sale. **Unless GS Finance Corp. or its agent informs the purchaser otherwise in the confirmation of sale, this document is being used in a market-making transaction.**

| ADDITIONAL SUMMARY TERMS | |
|------------------------------|---|
| | \$10 + supplemental payment |
| Payment at maturity: | <i>In no event will the payment at maturity be less than the stated principal amount.</i> |
| Supplemental payment: | \$10 × leverage factor × the index percent change, provided that in no event will the supplemental payment be less than \$0 |
| Leverage factor: | 200% |
| Index percent change: | (final index value - initial index value) / initial index value |
| Initial index value: | , which is the index closing value on the pricing date |
| Final index value: | The index closing value on the valuation date |
| CUSIP / ISIN: | 36256M858 / US36256M8588 |
| Listing: | The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange |
| Underwriter: | Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC |

Estimated Value of Your Notes

The estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the pricing date (as determined by reference to pricing models used by Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (GS&Co.) and taking into account our credit spreads) is expected to be in the range (the estimated value range) specified on the cover of this document (per \$10 principal amount), which is less than the original issue price. The value of your notes at any time will reflect many factors and cannot be predicted; however, the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would initially buy or sell notes (if it makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) and the value that GS&Co. will initially use for account statements and otherwise is equal to approximately the estimated value of your notes at the time of pricing, plus an additional amount (initially equal to \$ per \$10 principal amount).

Prior to , the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would buy or sell your notes (if it makes a market, which it is not obligated to do) will equal approximately the sum of (a) the then-current estimated value of your notes (as determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models) plus (b) any remaining additional amount (the additional amount will decline to zero on a straight-line basis from the time of pricing through). On and after , the price (not including GS&Co.'s customary bid and ask spreads) at which GS&Co. would buy or sell your notes (if it makes a market) will equal approximately the then-current estimated value of your notes determined by reference to such pricing models.

About Your Notes

GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. have filed a registration statement (including a prospectus, as supplemented by the prospectus supplement and general terms supplement no. 1,735 listed below) with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for the offering to which this communication relates. Before you invest, you should read the prospectus, prospectus supplement and general terms supplement no. 1,735 and any other documents relating to this offering that GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. have filed with the SEC for more complete information about us and this offering. You may get these documents without cost by visiting EDGAR on the SEC web site at sec.gov. Alternatively, we will arrange to send you the prospectus, prospectus supplement and general terms supplement no. 1,735 if you so request by calling (212) 357-4612.

The notes are part of the Medium-Term Notes, Series E program of GS Finance Corp. and are fully and unconditionally guaranteed by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. This document should be read in conjunction with the following:

- [General terms supplement no. 1,735 dated July 10, 2017](#)
- [Prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017](#)
- [Prospectus dated July 10, 2017](#)

The information in this document supersedes any conflicting information in the documents listed above. In addition, some of the terms or features described in the listed documents may not apply to your notes.

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GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024

We refer to the notes we are offering by this document as the offered notes or the notes. Each of the notes has the terms described under Summary Terms and Additional Provisions in this document. Please note that in this document, references to GS Finance Corp., we, our and us mean only GS Finance Corp. and do not include its subsidiaries or affiliates, references to The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., our parent company, mean only The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and do not include its subsidiaries or affiliates and references to Goldman Sachs mean The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. together with its consolidated subsidiaries and affiliates, including us. Also, references to the accompanying prospectus mean the accompanying prospectus, dated July 10, 2017, references to the accompanying prospectus supplement mean the accompanying prospectus supplement, dated July 10, 2017, for Medium-Term Notes, Series E, and references to the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 mean the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735, dated July 10, 2017, in each case of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. The notes will be issued under the senior debt indenture, dated as of October 10, 2008, as supplemented by the First Supplemental Indenture, dated as of February 20, 2015, each among us, as issuer, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor, and The Bank of New York Mellon, as trustee. This indenture, as so supplemented and as further supplemented thereafter, is referred to as the GSFC 2008 indenture in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

Investment Summary

The Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024 (the notes) offer 200% participation in the positive performance of the underlying index. The notes provide investors:

- an opportunity to gain leveraged exposure to any appreciation of the EURO STOXX 50® Index over the term of the notes
- the repayment of principal and no exposure to any decline of the underlying index if the notes are held to maturity.

You will not receive dividends on the stocks comprising the underlying index (the underlying index stocks) or any interest payments on your notes. At maturity, if the underlying index has depreciated or has not appreciated at all, you will receive the stated principal amount of \$10 per note, without any positive return on your investment. All payments on the notes, including the repayment of principal at maturity, are subject to our credit risk.

Maturity: Approximately 5 years

Payment at maturity:

- If the final index value is greater than the initial index value, \$10 + the supplemental payment.

- If the final index value is equal to or less than the initial index value, \$10. *In no event will the payment at maturity be less than the stated principal amount.*

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Final index value: | The index closing value on the valuation date |
| Index percent change: | $(\text{final index value} - \text{initial index value}) / \text{initial index value}$ |
| Supplemental payment: | $\$10 \times \text{leverage factor} \times \text{the index percent change}$. <i>In no event will the supplemental payment be less than \$0.</i> |
| Leverage factor: | 200% |
| Minimum payment at maturity: | \$10 |
| Interest: | None |
| Redemption: | None. The notes will not be subject to redemption right or price dependent redemption right. |

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GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024

Key Investment Rationale

The notes offer leveraged exposure to any positive performance of the EURO STOXX 50® Index and provide for the repayment of principal at maturity. They are for investors who are concerned about principal risk but seek an equity index-based return, and who are willing to forgo interest payments in exchange for the repayment of principal at maturity plus the potential to receive a supplemental payment based on the performance of the underlying index. At maturity, if the underlying index has appreciated in value, investors will receive the stated principal amount of their investment plus the supplemental payment. If the underlying index has not appreciated or has depreciated in value, investors will receive the principal amount of their investment. **Investors will not receive dividends on the underlying index stocks or any interest payments on the notes.** All payments on the notes are subject to the credit risk of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor.

Repayment of principal

The notes offer investors 200% upside exposure to the performance of the underlying index, while providing for the repayment of principal at maturity.

Upside Scenario

The underlying index increases in value. In this case, you receive a full return of principal as well as the supplemental payment reflecting 200% of the appreciation of the underlying index. For example, if the final index value is 2.00% greater than the initial index value, the notes will provide a total return of 4.00% at maturity.

Par Scenario

The underlying index declines or does not appreciate in value. In this case, the notes pay only the stated principal amount of \$10 at maturity.

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GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024

How the Notes Work

Payoff Diagram

The payoff diagram below illustrates the payment at maturity on the notes based on the following terms:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Stated principal amount: | \$10 per note |
| Leverage factor: | 200% |
| Minimum payment at maturity: | \$10 |

Payoff Diagram

How it works

§ **Upside Scenario.** If the final index value is greater than the initial index value, investors will receive the \$10 stated principal amount plus a supplemental payment reflecting 200% of the appreciation of the underlying index from the pricing date to the valuation date of the notes.

§ If the underlying index appreciates 2.00%, investors will receive a 4.00% return, or \$10.40 per note reflecting the \$10 principal amount and \$0.40 supplemental payment.

§ **Par Scenario.** If the final index value is equal to or less than the initial index value, investors will receive the \$10 stated principal amount per note.

If the underlying index depreciates 30.00%, the investor would receive \$10 per note.

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[Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024](#)

Additional Hypothetical Examples

The following examples are provided for purposes of illustration only. They should not be taken as an indication or prediction of future investment results and merely are intended to illustrate the impact that the various hypothetical index closing values on the valuation date could have on the payment at maturity assuming all other variables remain constant.

The examples below are based on a range of final index values that are entirely hypothetical; the index closing value on any day throughout the life of the notes, including the final index value on the valuation date, cannot be predicted. The underlying index has been highly volatile in the past meaning that the index closing value has changed considerably in relatively short periods and its performance cannot be predicted for any future period.

The information in the following examples reflects hypothetical rates of return on the offered notes assuming that they are purchased on the original issue date at the stated principal amount and held to the stated maturity date. If you sell your notes in a secondary market prior to the stated maturity date, your return will depend upon the market value of your notes at the time of sale, which may be affected by a number of factors that are not reflected in the examples below such as interest rates, the volatility of the underlying index and the creditworthiness of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, and the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor. The information in the examples also reflects the key terms and assumptions in the box below.

| Key Terms and Assumptions | |
|--|---------|
| Stated principal amount | \$10 |
| Leverage factor | 200.00% |
| Neither a market disruption event nor a non-index business day occurs on the originally scheduled valuation date | |
| No change in or affecting any of the underlying index stocks or the method by which the underlying index publisher calculates the underlying index | |
| Notes purchased on original issue date at the stated principal amount and held to the stated maturity date | |

Moreover, we have not yet set the initial index value that will serve as the baseline for determining the amount that we will pay on your notes at maturity. We will not do so until the pricing date. As a result, the actual initial index value may differ substantially from the index closing value prior to the pricing date.

For these reasons, the actual performance of the underlying index over the life of your notes, as well as the amount payable at maturity may bear little relation to the hypothetical examples shown below or to the historical index closing values shown elsewhere in this document. For information about the historical values of the underlying index during recent periods, see [The Underlying Index Historical Index Closing Values](#) below. Before investing in the offered notes, you should consult publicly available information to determine the values of the underlying index between the date of this document and the date of your purchase of the offered notes.

Also, the hypothetical examples shown below do not take into account the effects of applicable taxes. Because of the U.S. tax treatment applicable to your notes, tax liabilities could affect the after-tax rate of return on your notes to a comparatively greater extent than the after-tax return on the underlying index stocks.

The values in the left column of the table below represent hypothetical final index values and are expressed as percentages of the initial index value. The amounts in the right column represent the hypothetical payments at maturity, based on the corresponding hypothetical final index value, and are expressed as percentages of the stated principal amount of a note (rounded to the nearest one-thousandth of a percent). Thus, a hypothetical payment at maturity of 100.000% means that the value of the cash payment that we would deliver for each \$10 of the outstanding stated principal amount of the offered notes on the stated maturity date would equal 100.000% of the stated principal amount of a note, based on the corresponding hypothetical final index value and the assumptions noted above.

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| Hypothetical Final Index Value (as Percentage of Initial Index Value) | Hypothetical Payment at Maturity (as Percentage of Stated Principal Amount) |
|--|--|
| 200.000% | 300.000% |
| 175.000% | 250.000% |
| 150.000% | 200.000% |
| 125.000% | 150.000% |
| 100.000% | 100.000% |
| 75.000% | 100.000% |
| 50.000% | 100.000% |
| 30.000% | 100.000% |
| 25.000% | 100.000% |
| 0.000% | 100.000% |

If, for example, the final index value were determined to be 25.000% of the initial index value, the payment at maturity that we would deliver on your notes at maturity would be 100.000% of the stated principal amount of your notes, as shown in the table above. As a result, if you purchased your notes on the original issue date at the stated principal amount and held them to the stated maturity date, you would receive no return on your investment.

The payments at maturity shown above are entirely hypothetical; they are based on market prices for the underlying index stocks that may not be achieved on the valuation date and on assumptions that may prove to be erroneous. The actual market value of your notes on the stated maturity date or at any other time, including any time you may wish to sell your notes, may bear little relation to the hypothetical payments at maturity shown above, and these amounts should not be viewed as an indication of the financial return on an investment in the offered notes. The hypothetical payments at maturity on notes held to the stated maturity date in the examples above assume you purchased your notes at their stated principal amount and have not been adjusted to reflect the actual issue price you pay for your notes. The return on your investment (whether positive or negative) in your notes will be affected by the amount you pay for your notes. If you purchase your notes for a price other than the stated principal amount, the return on your investment will differ from, and may be significantly lower than, the hypothetical returns suggested by the above examples. Please read **Risk Factors** **The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors** below.

Payments on the notes are economically equivalent to the amounts that would be paid on a combination of other instruments. For example, payments on the notes are economically equivalent to a combination of an interest-bearing bond bought by the holder and one or more options entered into between the holder and us (with one or more implicit option premiums paid over time). The discussion in this paragraph does not modify or affect the terms of the notes or the U.S. federal income tax treatment of the notes, as described elsewhere in this document.

We cannot predict the actual final index value or what the market value of your notes will be on any particular index business day, nor can we predict the relationship between the index closing value and the market value of your notes at any time prior to the stated maturity date. The actual amount that you will receive at maturity and the rate of return on the offered notes will depend on the actual initial index value, which we will set on the pricing date, and the actual final index value determined by the calculation agent as described above. Moreover, the assumptions on which the hypothetical returns are based may turn out to be inaccurate.

Consequently, the amount of cash to be paid in respect of your notes on the stated maturity date may be very different from the information reflected in the examples above.

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Risk Factors

An investment in your notes is subject to the risks described below, as well as the risks and considerations described in the accompanying prospectus, in the accompanying prospectus supplement and under Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Notes in the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735. You should carefully review these risks and considerations as well as the terms of the notes described herein and in the accompanying prospectus, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735. Your notes are a riskier investment than ordinary debt securities. Also, your notes are not equivalent to investing directly in the underlying index stocks, i.e., the stocks comprising the underlying index to which your notes are linked. You should carefully consider whether the offered notes are suited to your particular circumstances.

Your Notes Do Not Bear Interest

You will not receive any interest payments on your notes. As a result, even if the payment at maturity payable for your notes on the stated maturity date exceeds the stated principal amount of your notes, the overall return you earn on your notes may be less than you would have earned by investing in a non-indexed debt security of comparable maturity that bears interest at a prevailing market rate.

The Notes Are Subject to the Credit Risk of the Issuer and the Guarantor

Although the return on the notes will be based on the performance of the underlying index, the payment of any amount due on the notes is subject to the credit risk of GS Finance Corp., as issuer of the notes, and the credit risk of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor of the notes. The notes are our unsecured obligations. Investors are dependent on our ability to pay all amounts due on the notes, and therefore investors are subject to our credit risk and to changes in the market's view of our creditworthiness. Similarly, investors are dependent on the ability of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor of the notes, to pay all amounts due on the notes, and therefore are also subject to its credit risk and to changes in the market's view of its creditworthiness. See Description of the Notes We May Offer Information About Our Medium-Term Notes, Series E Program How the Notes Rank Against Other Debt on page S-4 of the accompanying prospectus supplement and Description of Debt Securities We May Offer Guarantee by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. on page 42 of the accompanying prospectus.

The Return on Your Notes Will Not Reflect Any Dividends Paid on the Underlying Index Stocks

The underlying index publisher calculates the value of the underlying index by reference to the prices of its underlying index stocks, without taking account of the value of dividends paid on those underlying index stocks. Therefore, the return on your notes will not reflect the return you would realize if you actually owned the underlying index stocks and received the dividends paid on those underlying index stocks. You will not receive any dividends that may be paid on any of the underlying index stocks by the underlying index stock issuer. See [Investing in the Notes is Not Equivalent to Investing in the Underlying Index; You Have No Shareholder Rights or Rights to Receive Any Underlying Index Stock](#) below for additional information.

The Estimated Value of Your Notes At the Time the Terms of Your Notes Are Set On the Pricing Date (as Determined By Reference to Pricing Models Used By GS&Co.) Is Less Than the Original Issue Price Of Your Notes

The original issue price for your notes exceeds the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the pricing date, as determined by reference to GS&Co.'s pricing models and taking into account our credit spreads. Such expected estimated value on the pricing date is set forth above under [Estimated Value of Your Notes](#); after the pricing date, the estimated value as determined by reference to these models will be affected by changes in market conditions, the creditworthiness of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor and other relevant factors. The price at which GS&Co. would initially buy or sell your notes (if GS&Co. makes a market, which it is not obligated to do), and the value that GS&Co. will initially use for account statements

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and otherwise, also exceeds the estimated value of your notes as determined by reference to these models. As agreed by GS&Co. and the distribution participants, this excess (i.e., the additional amount described under [Estimated Value of Your Notes](#)) will decline to zero on a straight line basis over the period from the date hereof through the applicable date set forth above under

[Estimated Value of Your Notes](#) . Thereafter, if GS&Co. buys or sells your notes it will do so at prices that reflect the estimated value determined by reference to such pricing models at that time. The price at which GS&Co. will buy or sell your notes at any time also will reflect its then current bid and ask spread for similar sized trades of structured notes.

In estimating the value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the pricing date, as disclosed above under

[Estimated Value of Your Notes](#) , GS&Co. 's pricing models consider certain variables, including principally our credit spreads, interest rates (forecasted, current and historical rates), volatility, price-sensitivity analysis and the time to maturity of the notes. These pricing models are proprietary and rely in part on certain assumptions about future events, which may prove to be incorrect. As a result, the actual value you would receive if you sold your notes in the secondary market, if any, to others may differ, perhaps materially, from the estimated value of your notes determined by reference to our models due to, among other things, any differences in pricing models or assumptions used by others. See [The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors](#) below.

The difference between the estimated value of your notes as of the time the terms of your notes are set on the pricing date and the original issue price is a result of certain factors, including principally the underwriting discount and commissions, the expenses incurred in creating, documenting and marketing the notes, and an estimate of the difference between the amounts we pay to GS&Co. and the amounts GS&Co. pays to us in connection with your notes. We pay to GS&Co. amounts based on what we would pay to holders of a non-structured note with a similar maturity. In return for such payment, GS&Co. pays to us the amounts we owe under your notes.

In addition to the factors discussed above, the value and quoted price of your notes at any time will reflect many factors and cannot be predicted. If GS&Co. makes a market in the notes, the price quoted by GS&Co. would reflect any changes in market conditions and other relevant factors, including any deterioration in our creditworthiness or perceived creditworthiness or the creditworthiness or perceived creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. These changes may adversely affect the value of your notes, including the price you may receive for your notes in any market making transaction. To the extent that GS&Co. makes a market in the notes, the quoted price will reflect the estimated value determined by reference to GS&Co. 's pricing models at that time, plus or minus its then current bid and ask spread for similar sized trades of structured notes (and subject to the declining excess amount described above).

Furthermore, if you sell your notes, you will likely be charged a commission for secondary market transactions, or the price will likely reflect a dealer discount. This commission or discount will further reduce the proceeds you would receive for your notes in a secondary market sale.

There is no assurance that GS&Co. or any other party will be willing to purchase your notes at any price and, in this regard, GS&Co. is not obligated to make a market in the notes. See [Your Notes May Not Have an Active Trading Market](#) below.

The Amount Payable on Your Notes Is Not Linked to the Value of the Underlying Index at Any Time Other than the Valuation Date

The final index value will be based on the index closing value on the valuation date (subject to adjustment as described elsewhere in this document). Therefore, if the index closing value dropped precipitously on the valuation date, the payment at maturity for your notes may be significantly less than it would have been had the payment at maturity been linked to the index closing value prior to such drop in the value of the underlying index. Although the actual value of the underlying index on the stated maturity date or at other times during the life of your notes may be higher than the final index value, you will not benefit from the index closing value at any time other than on the valuation date.

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The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors

When we refer to the market value of your notes, we mean the value that you could receive for your notes if you chose to sell them in the open market before the stated maturity date. A number of factors, many of which are beyond our control, will influence the market value of your notes, including:

- the value of the underlying index;
- the volatility i.e., the frequency and magnitude of changes in the index closing value of the underlying index;
- the dividend rates of the underlying index stocks;
- economic, financial, regulatory, political, military and other events that affect stock markets generally and the underlying index stocks, and which may affect the index closing value of the underlying index;
- interest rates and yield rates in the market;
- the time remaining until your notes mature; and
- our creditworthiness and the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., whether actual or perceived, including actual or anticipated upgrades or downgrades in our credit ratings or the credit ratings of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. or changes in other credit measures.

These factors, and many other factors, will influence the price you will receive if you sell your notes before maturity, including the price you may receive for your notes in any market making transaction. If you sell your notes before maturity, you may receive less than the principal amount of your notes or the amount you may receive at maturity.

You cannot predict the future performance of the underlying index based on its historical performance. The actual performance of the underlying index over the life of the offered notes or the payment at maturity may bear little or no relation to the historical index closing values of the underlying index or to the hypothetical examples shown elsewhere in this document.

Your Notes May Not Have an Active Trading Market

Your notes will not be listed or displayed on any securities exchange or included in any interdealer market quotation system, and there may be little or no secondary market for your notes. Even if a secondary market for your notes develops, it may not provide significant liquidity and we expect that transaction costs in any secondary market would be high. As a result, the difference between bid and asked prices for your notes in any secondary market could be substantial.

If the Value of the Underlying Index Changes, the Market Value of Your Notes May Not Change in the Same Manner

The price of your notes may move quite differently than the performance of the underlying index. Changes in the value of the underlying index may not result in a comparable change in the market value of your notes. Even if the value of the underlying index increases above the initial index value during some portion of the life of the notes, the market value of your notes may not reflect this amount. We discuss some of the reasons for this disparity under [The Market Value of Your Notes May Be Influenced by Many Unpredictable Factors](#) above.

Anticipated Hedging Activities by Goldman Sachs or Our Distributors May Negatively Impact Investors in the Notes and Cause Our Interests and Those of Our Clients and Counterparties to be Contrary to Those of Investors in the Notes

Goldman Sachs expects to hedge our obligations under the notes by purchasing listed or over-the-counter options, futures and/or other instruments linked to the underlying index. Goldman Sachs also expects to adjust the hedge by, among other things, purchasing or selling any of the foregoing, and perhaps other instruments linked to the underlying index or the underlying index stocks, at any time and from time to time, and to unwind the hedge by selling any of the foregoing on or before the valuation date for your notes. Alternatively, Goldman Sachs may hedge all or part of our obligations under the notes with

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unaffiliated distributors of the notes which we expect will undertake similar market activity. Goldman Sachs may also enter into, adjust and unwind hedging transactions relating to other index-linked securities whose returns are linked to changes in the value of the underlying index or the underlying index stocks, as applicable.

In addition to entering into such transactions itself, or distributors entering into such transactions, Goldman Sachs may structure such transactions for its clients or counterparties, or otherwise advise or assist clients or counterparties in entering into such transactions. These activities may be undertaken to achieve a variety of objectives, including: permitting other purchasers of the notes or other securities to hedge their investment in whole or in part; facilitating transactions for other clients or counterparties that may have business objectives or investment strategies that are inconsistent with or contrary to those of investors in the notes; hedging the exposure of Goldman Sachs to the notes including any interest in the notes that it reacquires or retains as part of the offering process, through its market-making activities or otherwise; enabling Goldman Sachs to comply with its internal risk limits or otherwise manage firmwide, business unit or product risk; and/or enabling Goldman Sachs to take directional views as to relevant markets on behalf of itself or its clients or counterparties that are inconsistent with or contrary to the views and objectives of the investors in the notes.

Any of these hedging or other activities may adversely affect the value of the underlying index directly or indirectly by affecting the value of the underlying index stocks and therefore the market value of your notes and the amount we will pay on your notes at maturity. In addition, you should expect that these transactions will cause Goldman Sachs or its clients, counterparties or distributors to have economic interests and incentives that do not align with, and that may be directly contrary to, those of an investor in the notes. Neither Goldman Sachs nor any distributor will have any obligation to take, refrain from taking or cease taking any action with respect to these transactions based on the potential effect on an investor in the notes, and may receive substantial returns on hedging or other activities while the value of your notes declines. In addition, if the distributor from which you purchase notes is to conduct hedging activities in connection with the notes, that distributor may otherwise profit in connection with such hedging activities and such profit, if any, will be in addition to the compensation that the distributor receives for the sale of the notes to you. You should be aware that the potential to earn fees in connection with hedging activities may create a further incentive for the distributor to sell the notes to you in addition to the compensation they would receive for the sale of the notes.

Goldman Sachs Trading and Investment Activities for its Own Account or for its Clients, Could Negatively Impact Investors in the Notes

Goldman Sachs is a global investment banking, securities and investment management firm that provides a wide range of financial services to a substantial and diversified client base that includes corporations, financial institutions, governments and individuals. As such, it acts as an investor, investment banker, research provider, investment manager, investment advisor, market maker, trader, prime broker and lender. In those and other capacities, Goldman Sachs purchases, sells or holds a broad array of investments, actively trades securities, derivatives, loans, commodities, currencies, credit default swaps, indices, baskets and other financial instruments and products for its own account or for the accounts of its customers, and will have other direct or indirect interests, in the global fixed income, currency, commodity, equity, bank loan and other markets. Any of Goldman Sachs' financial market activities may, individually or in the aggregate, have an adverse effect on the market for your notes, and you should expect that the interests of Goldman Sachs or its clients or counterparties will at times be adverse to those of investors in the notes.

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Goldman Sachs regularly offers a wide array of securities, financial instruments and other products into the marketplace, including existing or new products that are similar to your notes, or similar or linked to the underlying index or underlying index stocks. Investors in the notes should expect that Goldman Sachs will offer securities, financial instruments, and other products that will compete with the notes for liquidity, research coverage or otherwise.

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The Policies of the Underlying Index Publisher and Changes That Affect the Underlying Index or the Underlying Index Stocks Comprising the Underlying Index Could Affect the Payment at Maturity and the Market Value of the Notes

The policies of the underlying index publisher concerning the calculation of the value of the underlying index, additions, deletions or substitutions of underlying index stocks and the manner in which changes affecting the underlying index stocks or their issuers, such as stock dividends, reorganizations or mergers, are reflected in the value of the underlying index, could affect the value of the underlying index and, therefore, the payment at maturity and the market value of your notes before the stated maturity date. The payment at maturity and the market value of your notes could also be affected if the underlying index publisher changes these policies, for example, by changing the manner in which it calculates the underlying index value or if the underlying index publisher discontinues or suspends calculation or publication of the value of the underlying index, in which case it may become difficult to determine the market value of your notes. If events such as these occur, the calculation agent which initially will be GS&Co., our affiliate may determine the index closing value of the underlying index on any such date and thus the payment at maturity in a manner it considers appropriate, in its sole discretion. We describe the discretion that the calculation agent will have in determining the underlying index value on any index business day or the valuation date and the payment at maturity more fully under

Supplemental Terms of the Notes Discontinuance or Modification of an Underlying and Role of Calculation Agent on page S-27 and S-28 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735.

Investing in the Notes is Not Equivalent to Investing in the Underlying Index; You Have No Shareholder Rights or Rights to Receive Any Underlying Index Stock

Investing in your notes is not equivalent to investing in the underlying index and will not make you a holder of any of the underlying index stocks. Neither you nor any other holder or owner of your notes will have any rights with respect to the underlying index stocks, including any voting rights, any right to receive dividends or other distributions, any rights to make a claim against the underlying index stocks or any other rights of a holder of the underlying index stocks. Your notes will be paid in cash and you will have no right to receive delivery of any underlying index stocks.

We May Sell an Additional Aggregate Stated Principal Amount of the Notes at a Different Issue Price

At our sole option, we may decide to sell an additional aggregate stated principal amount of the notes subsequent to the date of this document. The issue price of the notes in the subsequent sale may differ substantially (higher or lower) from the original issue price you paid as provided on the cover of this document.

If You Purchase Your Notes at a Premium to Stated Principal Amount, the Return on Your Investment Will Be Lower Than the Return on Notes Purchased at Stated Principal Amount and the Impact of Certain Key Terms of the Notes Will Be Negatively Affected

The payment at maturity will not be adjusted based on the issue price you pay for the notes. If you purchase notes at a price that differs from the stated principal amount of the notes, then the return on your investment in such notes held to the stated maturity date will differ from, and may be substantially less than, the return on notes purchased at stated principal amount. If you purchase your notes at a premium to stated principal amount and hold them to the stated maturity date the return on your investment in the notes will be lower than it would have been had you purchased the notes at stated principal amount or a discount to stated principal amount.

An Investment in the Offered Notes Is Subject to Risks Associated with Foreign Securities

The value of your notes is linked to an underlying index that is comprised of stocks from one or more foreign securities markets. Investments linked to the value of foreign equity securities involve particular risks. Any foreign securities market may be less liquid, more volatile and affected by global or domestic market developments in a different way than are the U.S. securities market or other foreign securities markets. Both government intervention in a foreign securities market, either directly or indirectly, and cross-shareholdings in foreign companies, may affect trading prices and volumes in that market. Also,

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there is generally less publicly available information about foreign companies than about those U.S. companies that are subject to the reporting requirements of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Further, foreign companies are subject to accounting, auditing and financial reporting standards and requirements that differ from those applicable to U.S. reporting companies.

The prices of securities in a foreign country are subject to political, economic, financial and social factors that are unique to such foreign country's geographical region. These factors include: recent changes, or the possibility of future changes, in the applicable foreign government's economic and fiscal policies; the possible implementation of, or changes in, currency exchange laws or other laws or restrictions applicable to foreign companies or investments in foreign equity securities; fluctuations, or the possibility of fluctuations, in currency exchange rates; and the possibility of outbreaks of hostility, political instability, natural disaster or adverse public health developments. The United Kingdom has voted to leave the European Union (popularly known as Brexit). The effect of Brexit is uncertain, and Brexit has and may continue to contribute to volatility in the prices of securities of companies located in Europe and currency exchange rates, including the valuation of the euro and British pound in particular. Any one of these factors, or the combination of more than one of these factors, could negatively affect such foreign securities market and the price of securities therein. Further, geographical regions may react to global factors in different ways, which may cause the prices of securities in a foreign securities market to fluctuate in a way that differs from those of securities in the U.S. securities market or other foreign securities markets. Foreign economies may also differ from the U.S. economy in important respects, including growth of gross national product, rate of inflation, capital reinvestment, resources and self-sufficiency, which may have a positive or negative effect on foreign securities prices.

Your Notes Will Be Treated as Debt Instruments Subject to Special Rules Governing Contingent Payment Debt Instruments for U.S. Federal Income Tax Purposes

The notes will be treated as debt instruments subject to special rules governing contingent payment debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If you are a U.S. individual or taxable entity, you generally will be required to pay taxes on ordinary income from the notes over their term based on the comparable yield for the notes, even though you will not receive any payments from us until maturity. This comparable yield is determined solely to calculate the amount on which you will be taxed prior to maturity and is neither a prediction nor a guarantee of what the actual yield will be. In addition, any gain you may recognize on the sale, exchange or maturity of the notes will be taxed as ordinary interest income. If you are a secondary purchaser of the notes, the tax consequences to you may be different. Please see "Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences" below for a more detailed discussion. Please also consult your tax advisor concerning the U.S. federal income tax and any other applicable tax consequences to you of owning your notes in your particular circumstances.

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding May Apply to Payments on Your Notes, Including as a Result of the Failure of the Bank or Broker Through Which You Hold the Notes to Provide Information to Tax Authorities

Please see the discussion under "United States Taxation—Taxation of Debt Securities—Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding" in the accompanying prospectus for a description of the applicability of FATCA to payments made on your notes.

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The Underlying Index

The EURO STOXX 50® Index is a free-float market capitalization-weighted index of 50 European blue-chip stocks and was created by and is sponsored and maintained by STOXX Limited. Publication of the EURO STOXX 50® Index began on February 26, 1998, based on an initial index value of 1,000 at December 31, 1991. The value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index is disseminated on the STOXX Limited website. STOXX Limited is under no obligation to continue to publish the index and may discontinue publication of it at any time. Additional information regarding the EURO STOXX 50® Index may be obtained from the STOXX Limited website: stoxx.com. We are not incorporating by reference the website or any material it includes in this document.

The top ten constituent stocks of the EURO STOXX 50® Index as of December 17, 2018, by weight, are: Total S.A. (5.87%), SAP SE (4.34%), Sanofi (3.98%), Siemens AG (3.84%), LINDE PLC (3.51%), Allianz SE (3.42%), Unilever N.V. (3.33%), LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE (3.03%), Banco Santander S.A. (2.95%) and ASML Holding N.V. (2.83%); constituent weights may be found at stoxx.com/download/indices/factsheets/SX5GT.pdf under Factsheets and Methodologies and are updated periodically. We are not incorporating by reference the website or any material it includes in this document.

As of December 17, 2018, the sixteen industry sectors which comprise the EURO STOXX 50® Index represent the following weights in the index: Automobiles & Parts (4.21%), Banks (10.76%), Chemicals (4.53%), Construction & Materials (2.68%), Food & Beverage (4.22%), Health Care (10.25%), Industrial Goods & Services (10.43%), Insurance (6.48%), Media (0.93%), Oil & Gas (7.48%), Personal & Household Goods (10.13%), Real Estate (0.89%), Retail (3.82%), Technology (9.73%), Telecommunications (5.23%) and Utilities (4.73%); industry weightings may be found at stoxx.com/download/indices/factsheets/SX5GT.pdf under Factsheets and Methodologies and are updated periodically. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Sector designations are determined by the underlying index publisher using criteria it has selected or developed. Index publishers may use very different standards for determining sector designations. In addition, many companies operate in a number of sectors, but are listed in only one sector and the basis on which that sector is selected may also differ. As a result, sector comparisons between indices with different index publishers may reflect differences in methodology as well as actual differences in the sector composition of the indices.

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As of December 17, 2018, the eight countries which comprise the EURO STOXX 50® Index represent the following weights in the index: Belgium (2.36%), Finland (1.33%), France (38.38%), Germany (27.88%), Ireland (4.37%), Italy (4.83%), Netherlands (10.53%) and Spain (10.32%); country weightings may be found at stoxx.com/download/indices/factsheets/SX5GT.pdf under Factsheets and Methodologies and are updated periodically.

The above information supplements the description of the underlying index found in the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735. This information was derived from information prepared by the underlying index publisher, however, the percentages we have listed above are approximate and may not match the information available on the underlying index publisher's website due to subsequent corporation actions or other activity relating to a particular stock. For more details about the underlying index, the underlying index publisher and license agreement between the underlying index publisher and the issuer, see The Underlyings EURO STOXX 50® Index on page S-75 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735.

The EURO STOXX 50® is the intellectual property of STOXX Limited, Zurich, Switzerland and/or its licensors (Licensors), which is used under license. The PLUS or other financial instruments based on the underlying index are in no way sponsored, endorsed, sold or promoted by STOXX and its Licensors and neither STOXX nor its Licensors shall have any liability with respect thereto.

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Historical Index Closing Values

The index closing value has fluctuated in the past and may, in the future, experience significant fluctuations. Any historical upward or downward trend in the index closing value during any period shown below is not an indication that the underlying index is more or less likely to increase or decrease at any time during the life of your notes.

You should not take the historical index closing values as an indication of the future performance of the underlying index. We cannot give you any assurance that the future performance of the underlying index or the underlying index stocks will result in your receiving an amount greater than the outstanding principal amount of your notes on the stated maturity date.

Neither we nor any of our affiliates make any representation to you as to the performance of the underlying index. Before investing in the offered notes, you should consult publicly available information to determine the values of the underlying index between the date of this document and the date of your purchase of the offered notes. The actual performance of the underlying index over the life of the offered notes, as well as the payment at maturity, may bear little relation to the historical index closing values shown below.

The table below shows the high, low and period end index closing values of the EURO STOXX 50® Index for each of the four calendar quarters in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 (through December 19, 2018). We obtained the index closing values listed in the tables below from Bloomberg Financial Services, without independent verification.

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Historical Quarterly High, Low and Period End Index Closing Values of the EURO STOXX 50® Index

| | High | Low | Period End |
|--|-------------|------------|-------------------|
| 2013 | | | |
| Quarter ended March 31 | 2,749.27 | 2,570.52 | 2,624.02 |
| Quarter ended June 30 | 2,835.87 | 2,511.83 | 2,602.59 |
| Quarter ended September 30 | 2,936.20 | 2,570.76 | 2,893.15 |
| Quarter ended December 31 | 3,111.37 | 2,902.12 | 3,109.00 |
| 2014 | | | |
| Quarter ended March 31 | 3,172.43 | 2,962.49 | 3,161.60 |
| Quarter ended June 30 | 3,314.80 | 3,091.52 | 3,228.24 |
| Quarter ended September 30 | 3,289.75 | 3,006.83 | 3,225.93 |
| Quarter ended December 31 | 3,277.38 | 2,874.65 | 3,146.43 |
| 2015 | | | |
| Quarter ended March 31 | 3,731.35 | 3,007.91 | 3,697.38 |
| Quarter ended June 30 | 3,828.78 | 3,424.30 | 3,424.30 |
| Quarter ended September 30 | 3,686.58 | 3,019.34 | 3,100.67 |
| Quarter ended December 31 | 3,506.45 | 3,069.05 | 3,267.52 |
| 2016 | | | |
| Quarter ended March 31 | 3,178.01 | 2,680.35 | 3,004.93 |
| Quarter ended June 30 | 3,151.69 | 2,697.44 | 2,864.74 |
| Quarter ended September 30 | 3,091.66 | 2,761.37 | 3,002.24 |
| Quarter ended December 31 | 3,290.52 | 2,954.53 | 3,290.52 |
| 2017 | | | |
| Quarter ended March 31 | 3,161.55 | 2,979.48 | 3,160.69 |
| Quarter ended June 30 | 3,276.11 | 3,105.46 | 3,122.17 |
| Quarter ended September 30 | 3,594.85 | 3,388.22 | 3,594.85 |
| Quarter ended December 31 | 3,697.40 | 3,503.96 | 3,503.96 |
| 2018 | | | |
| Quarter ended March 31 | 3,672.29 | 3,278.72 | 3,361.50 |
| Quarter ended June 30 | 3,592.18 | 3,340.35 | 3,395.60 |
| Quarter ended September 30 | 3,527.18 | 3,293.36 | 3,399.20 |
| Quarter ending December 31 (through December 19, 2018) | 3,414.16 | 3,016.99 | 3,051.38 |

The graph below shows the daily historical index closing values from January 1, 2007 through December 19, 2018. We obtained the index closing values in the graph below from Bloomberg Financial Services, without independent verification.

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Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences

The following section supplements the discussion of U.S. federal income taxation in the accompanying prospectus.

The following section is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP, counsel to GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. It applies to you only if you hold your notes as a capital asset for tax purposes. This section does not apply to you if you are a member of a class of holders subject to special rules, such as:

- a dealer in securities or currencies;

- a trader in securities that elects to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for your securities holdings;

- a bank;

- a regulated investment company;

- a life insurance company;

- a tax-exempt organization;

- a partnership;

- a person that owns the notes as a hedge or that is hedged against interest rate risks;

- a person that owns the notes as part of a straddle or conversion transaction for tax purposes; or
- a United States holder (as defined below) whose functional currency for tax purposes is not the U.S. dollar.

This section is based on the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, its legislative history, existing and proposed regulations under the Internal Revenue Code, published rulings and court decisions, all as currently in effect. These laws are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis.

You should consult your tax advisor concerning the U.S. federal income tax and other tax consequences of your investment in the notes, including the application of state, local or other tax laws and the possible effects of changes in federal or other tax laws.

United States Holders

This subsection describes the tax consequences to a United States holder. You are a United States holder if you are a beneficial owner of notes and you are:

- a citizen or resident of the United States;
- a domestic corporation;
- an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or
- a trust if a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

If you are not a United States holder, this section does not apply to you and you should refer to **United States Alien Holders** below.

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Your notes will be treated as debt instruments subject to special rules governing contingent payment debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Under those rules, the amount of interest you are required to take into account for each accrual period will be determined by constructing a projected payment schedule for your notes and applying rules similar to those for accruing original issue discount on a hypothetical noncontingent debt instrument with that projected payment schedule. This method is applied by first determining the yield at which we would issue a noncontingent fixed rate debt instrument with terms and conditions similar to your notes (the comparable yield) and then determining as of the issue date a payment schedule that would produce the comparable yield. These rules will generally have

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the effect of requiring you to include amounts in income in respect of your notes, even though you will not receive any payments from us until maturity.

We have determined that the comparable yield for the notes is equal to % per annum, compounded semi-annually with a projected payment at maturity of \$ based on an investment of \$10.

Based on this comparable yield, if you are an initial holder that holds a note until maturity and you pay your taxes on a calendar year basis, we have determined that you would be required to report the following amounts as ordinary income, not taking into account any positive or negative adjustments you may be required to take into account based on the actual payments on the notes, from the note each year:

| Accrual Period | Interest Deemed to Accrue During Accrual Period (per \$10 note) | Total Interest Deemed to Have Accrued from Original Issue Date (per \$10 note) as of End of Accrual Period |
|---|--|---|
| through December 31, 2019 | | |
| January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 | | |
| January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 | | |
| January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 | | |
| January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 | | |
| January 1, 2024 through | | |

You are required to use the comparable yield and projected payment schedule that we compute in determining your interest accruals in respect of your notes, unless you timely disclose and justify on your U.S. federal income tax return the use of a different comparable yield and projected payment schedule.

The comparable yield and projected payment schedule are not provided to you for any purpose other than the determination of your interest accruals in respect of your notes, and we make no representation regarding the amount of contingent payments with respect to your notes.

If you purchase your notes at a price other than their adjusted issue price determined for tax purposes, you must determine the extent to which the difference between the price you paid for your notes and their adjusted issue price is attributable to a change in expectations as to the projected payment schedule, a change in interest rates, or both, and reasonably allocate the difference

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accordingly. The adjusted issue price of your notes will equal your notes' original issue price plus any interest deemed to be accrued on your notes (under the rules governing contingent payment debt instruments) as of the time you purchase your notes. The original issue price of your notes will be the first price at which a substantial amount of the notes is sold to persons other than bond houses, brokers or similar persons or organizations acting in the capacity of underwriters, placement agents or wholesalers. Therefore, you may be required to make the adjustments described above even if you purchase your notes in the initial offering if you purchase your notes at a price other than the issue price.

If the adjusted issue price of your notes is greater than the price you paid for your notes, you must make positive adjustments increasing (i) the amount of interest that you would otherwise accrue and include in income each year, and (ii) the amount of ordinary income (or decreasing the amount of ordinary loss) recognized upon maturity by the amounts allocated under the previous paragraph to each of interest and the projected payment schedule; if the adjusted issue price of your notes is less than the price you paid for your notes, you must make negative adjustments, decreasing (i) the amount of interest that you must include in income each year, and (ii) the amount of ordinary income (or increasing the amount of ordinary loss) recognized upon maturity by the amounts allocated under the previous paragraph to each of interest and the projected payment schedule. Adjustments allocated to the interest amount are not made until the date the daily portion of interest accrues.

Because any Form 1099-OID that you receive will not reflect the effects of positive or negative adjustments resulting from your purchase of notes at a price other than the adjusted issue price

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determined for tax purposes, you are urged to consult with your tax advisor as to whether and how adjustments should be made to the amounts reported on any Form 1099-OID.

You will recognize income or loss upon the sale, exchange or maturity of your notes in an amount equal to the difference, if any, between the cash amount you receive at such time and your adjusted basis in your notes. In general, your adjusted basis in your notes will equal the amount you paid for your notes, increased by the amount of interest you previously accrued with respect to your notes (in accordance with the comparable yield and the projected payment schedule for your notes), and increased or decreased by the amount of any positive or negative adjustment, respectively, that you are required to make if you purchase your notes at a price other than the adjusted issue price determined for tax purposes.

Any income you recognize upon the sale, exchange or maturity of your notes will be ordinary interest income. Any loss you recognize at such time will be ordinary loss to the extent of interest you included as income in the current or previous taxable years in respect of your notes, and thereafter, capital loss. If you are a noncorporate holder, you would generally be able to use such ordinary loss to offset your income only in the taxable year in which you recognize the ordinary loss and would generally not be able to carry such ordinary loss forward or back to offset income in other taxable years.

Pursuant to recently enacted legislation, for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018, with respect to a debt instrument issued with original issue discount, such as the notes, an accrual method taxpayer that reports revenues on an applicable financial statement generally must recognize income for U.S. federal income tax purposes no later than the taxable year in which such income is taken into account as revenue in an applicable financial statement of the taxpayer. For this purpose, an applicable financial statement generally means a financial statement certified as having been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles or that is made on the basis of international financial reporting standards and which is used by the taxpayer for various specified purposes. This rule could potentially require such a taxpayer to recognize income for U.S. federal income tax purposes with respect to the notes prior to the time such income would be recognized pursuant to the rules described above. Potential investors in the notes should consult their tax advisors regarding the potential applicability of these rules to their investment in the notes.

United States Alien Holders

If you are a United States alien holder, please see the discussion under **United States Taxation – Taxation of Debt Securities – United States Alien Holders** in the accompanying prospectus for a description of the tax consequences relevant to you. You are a United States alien holder if you are the beneficial owner of the notes and are, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

- a nonresident alien individual;

- a foreign corporation; or
- an estate or trust that in either case is not subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis on income or gain from the notes.

In addition, the Treasury Department has issued regulations under which amounts paid or deemed paid on certain financial instruments (871(m) financial instruments) that are treated as attributable to U.S.-source dividends could be treated, in whole or in part depending on the circumstances, as a dividend equivalent payment that is subject to tax at a rate of 30% (or a lower rate under an applicable treaty), which in the case of amounts you receive upon the sale, exchange or maturity of your notes, could be collected via withholding. If these regulations were to apply to the notes, we may be required to withhold such taxes if any U.S.-source dividends are paid on the stocks included in the underlying index during the term of the notes. We could also require you to make certifications (e.g., an applicable Internal Revenue Service Form W-8) prior to the maturity of the notes in order to avoid or minimize withholding obligations, and we could withhold accordingly (subject to your potential right to claim a refund from the Internal Revenue Service) if such certifications were not received or were not satisfactory. If withholding was required, we would not be required to pay any additional amounts with respect to amounts so withheld. These regulations generally will apply to 871(m) financial instruments (or a combination of financial instruments treated as having been entered into in connection with each other) issued (or significantly

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modified and treated as retired and reissued) on or after January 1, 2022, but will also apply to certain 871(m) financial instruments (or a combination of financial instruments treated as having been entered into in connection with each other) that have a delta (as defined in the applicable Treasury regulations) of one and are issued (or significantly modified and treated as retired and reissued) on or after January 1, 2017. In addition, these regulations will not apply to financial instruments that reference a qualified index (as defined in the regulations). We have determined that, as of the issue date of your notes, your notes will not be subject to withholding under these rules. In certain limited circumstances, however, you should be aware that it is possible for United States alien holders to be liable for tax under these rules with respect to a combination of transactions treated as having been entered into in connection with each other even when no withholding is required. You should consult your tax advisor concerning these regulations, subsequent official guidance and regarding any other possible alternative characterizations of your notes for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding

Pursuant to Treasury regulations, Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) withholding (as described in United States Taxation Taxation of Debt Securities Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) Withholding in the accompanying prospectus) will generally apply to obligations that are issued on or after July 1, 2014; therefore, the notes will generally be subject to the FATCA withholding rules.

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Additional Information About the Notes

*This section is meant as a summary and should be read in conjunction with the section entitled **Supplemental Terms of the Notes** on page S-16 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735. This document supersedes any conflicting provisions of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735.*

Please read this information in conjunction with the summary terms on the front cover of this document.

Additional Provisions:

| | |
|--|---|
| Underlying index publisher: | STOXX Limited |
| Denominations: | \$10 and integral multiples of \$10 in excess thereof |
| Interest: | None |
| Postponement of stated maturity date: | As described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Stated Maturity Date on page S-16 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |
| Postponement of valuation date: | As described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Valuation Date on page S-16 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |
| Specified currency: | U.S. dollars (\$) |
| Index closing value: | As described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Special Calculation Provisions Closing Value, Index Closing Value and ETF Closing Price on page S-31 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |
| Business day: | As described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Special Calculation Provisions Business Day on page S-30 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |
| Index business day: | As described under Supplemental Terms of the Notes Special Calculation Provisions Underlying Business Day, Index Business Day and ETF Business Day on page S-30 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |
| FDIC: | The notes are not bank deposits and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency, nor are they obligations of, or guaranteed by, a bank |
| Tax considerations: | The notes will be treated as debt instruments subject to the special rules governing contingent payment debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes, as described under Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences above. Under this treatment, it is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP that if you are a U.S. individual or taxable entity, you generally should be required to pay taxes on ordinary income from the notes over their term based on the comparable yield for the notes. In addition, any gain you may recognize on the sale, exchange or maturity of the notes will be taxed as ordinary interest income. |
| Trustee: | The Bank of New York Mellon |
| Calculation agent: | GS&Co. |
| Use of proceeds and hedging: | As described under Use of Proceeds and Hedging on page S-94 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |
| ERISA: | As described under Employee Retirement Income Security Act on page S-102 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 |

**Supplemental plan of distribution;
conflicts of interest:**

As described under Supplemental Plan of Distribution on page S-103 of the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735 and Plan of Distribution Conflicts of Interest on page 117 of the accompanying prospectus; GS Finance Corp. estimates that its share of the total offering expenses, excluding underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately \$.

January 2019

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GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024

GS Finance Corp. will sell to GS&Co., and GS&Co. will purchase from GS Finance Corp., the aggregate stated principal amount of the offered notes specified on the front cover of this document. GS&Co. proposes initially to offer the notes to the public at the original issue price set forth on the cover page of this document. Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC (Morgan Stanley Wealth Management), acting as dealer for the offering, will receive a selling concession of \$0.35, or 3.50% of the principal amount, for each note it sells. Morgan Stanley Wealth Management has informed us that it intends to internally allocate at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management \$0.05 of the selling concession, or 0.50% of the principal amount, for each note as a structuring fee. Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC will receive an underwriting discount of \$0.035, or 0.35% of the principal amount, for each note. GS&Co. is an affiliate of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. and, as such, will have a conflict of interest in this offering of notes within the meaning of Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (FINRA) Rule 5121. Consequently, this offering of notes will be conducted in compliance with the provisions of FINRA Rule 5121. GS&Co. will not be permitted to sell notes in this offering to an account over which it exercises discretionary authority without the prior specific written approval of the account holder.

We expect to deliver the notes against payment therefor in New York, New York on February 5, 2019. Under Rule 15c6-1 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, trades in the secondary market generally are required to settle in two business days, unless the parties to any such trade expressly agree otherwise. Accordingly, purchasers who wish to trade notes on any date prior to two business days before delivery will be required to specify alternative settlement arrangements to prevent a failed settlement.

We have been advised by GS&Co. that it intends to make a market in the notes. However, neither GS&Co. nor any of our other affiliates that makes a market is obligated to do so and any of them may stop doing so at any time.

Contact:

Morgan Stanley Wealth Management clients may contact their local Morgan Stanley branch office or Morgan Stanley's principal executive offices at 1585 Broadway, New York, New York 10036 (telephone number (866) 477-4776).

About Your Notes:

GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. have filed a registration statement (including a prospectus, as supplemented by the prospectus supplement and general terms supplement no. 1,735 listed below) with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for the offering to which this communication relates. Before you invest, you should read the prospectus, prospectus supplement and

general terms supplement no. 1,735 and any other documents relating to this offering that we have filed with the SEC for more complete information about us and this offering. You may get these documents without cost by visiting EDGAR on the SEC web site at sec.gov. Alternatively, GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. will arrange to send you the prospectus, prospectus supplement and general terms supplement no. 1,735 if you so request by calling (212) 357-4612.

January 2019

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GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due February 5, 2024

The notes are part of the Medium-Term Notes, Series E program of GS Finance Corp., and are fully and unconditionally guaranteed by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. This document should be read in conjunction with the following:

- General terms supplement no. 1,735 dated July 10, 2017
- Prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017
- Prospectus dated July 10, 2017

The information in this document supersedes any conflicting information in the documents listed above. In addition, some of the terms or features described in the listed documents may not apply to your notes.

January 2019

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We have not authorized anyone to provide any information or to make any representations other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this document, the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. This document, the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is an offer to sell only the notes offered hereby, but only under circumstances and in jurisdictions where it is lawful to do so. The information contained in this document, the accompanying general terms supplement no. 1,735, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is current only as of the respective dates of such documents.

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GS Finance Corp.

Market-Linked Notes Based on the Value of the EURO STOXX 50® Index due
February 5, 2024

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC

January 2019

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