

GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC

Form 424B2

September 27, 2018

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Registration Statement No. 333-219206

GS Finance Corp.

\$726,000

Autocallable Contingent Coupon Index-Linked Notes due 2020

guaranteed by

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

If on any coupon determination date (the 25th day of each March, June, September and December, commencing in December 2018 and ending in March 2020) the closing level of each of the S&P 500[®] Index, the EURO STOXX 50[®] Index and the Russell 2000[®] Index is greater than or equal to its coupon trigger level of 70% of its initial level (the initial level is 2,915.56 with respect to the S&P 500[®] Index, 3,419.78 with respect to the EURO STOXX 50[®] Index and 1,708.805 with respect to the Russell 2000[®] Index), you will receive on the applicable coupon payment date (the fifth business day after the coupon determination date) a coupon for each \$1,000 face amount of your note equal to \$17.125.

Your note will be automatically called before the stated maturity date (April 1, 2020) if the closing level of each index on any coupon determination date commencing in March 2019 and ending in December 2019 is greater than or equal to its initial level. If your note is called, you will receive the face amount of your note plus a coupon on the applicable coupon payment date (even if a trigger event, described below, has occurred prior to the relevant coupon determination date).

If your note has not been called and a trigger event has not occurred, at maturity you will receive the face amount of your note plus a coupon payment. A trigger event will occur if the closing level of any index is less than its trigger level of 70% of its initial level on any day during the measurement period (the period from, but excluding, the trade date to, and including, the final coupon determination date, which is March 25, 2020). Regardless of the level of the indexes on the determination date, you will never receive more than the face amount of your note at maturity, plus a coupon. A trigger event may occur on any trading day during the measurement period and the occurrence of such event on any day, other than a coupon determination date, does not affect your ability to receive coupons nor the automatic call feature of your note.

If your note has not been called and a trigger event has occurred, at maturity you will receive an amount based on the index with the lowest index return (the percentage increase or decrease in the final level of such index on the final coupon determination date from its initial level). You will only receive a coupon payment if the conditions for receiving such payment described above are met. If a trigger event has occurred, you will lose the face amount of your note on a one-for-one basis based on any negative return of the lesser performing index (a 10% negative index return on the lesser performing index will result in the loss of 10% of the face amount of your note at maturity).

A purchaser of these notes in the secondary market should determine if a trigger event has already occurred. The occurrence of a trigger event could affect both the secondary market trading price of these notes or the amount that a holder of the notes will receive at maturity. In order to determine if a trigger event has occurred, see page S-23.

At maturity, if your note has not been called, for each \$1,000 face amount of your note you will receive the following:

· If a trigger event has not occurred, \$1,000, plus a coupon payment; and

· If a trigger event has occurred, either:

o If the index return of each index is greater than or equal to zero, \$1,000, plus a coupon payment.

o If the index return of any index is negative, (a) \$1,000, plus (b) \$1,000 multiplied by the lowest of such index returns, plus a coupon payment if each index is greater than or equal to the coupon trigger level on the final coupon determination date. You could lose a significant portion of the face amount of your note and not receive any coupon payment.

You should read the disclosure herein to better understand the terms and risks of your investment, including the credit risk of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. See page S-11.

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The estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date is equal to approximately \$971 per \$1,000 face amount. For a discussion of the estimated value and the price at which Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC would initially buy or sell your notes, if it makes a market in the notes, see the following page.

Original issue date: September 28, 2018 Original issue price: 100% of the face amount
Underwriting discount: 2.51% of the face amount Net proceeds to the issuer: 97.49% of the face amount

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 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
Prospectus Supplement No. 4,178 dated September 25, 2018.

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The issue price, underwriting discount and net proceeds listed above relate to the notes we sell initially. We may decide to sell additional notes after the date of this prospectus supplement, 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 prospectus in the initial sale of the notes. In addition, Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC or any other affiliate of GS Finance Corp. may use this prospectus 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 prospectus is being used in a market-making transaction.

Estimated Value of Your Notes

The estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date (as determined by reference to pricing models used by Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (GS&Co.) and taking into account our credit spreads) is equal to approximately \$971 per \$1,000 face 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 \$5.4 per \$1,000 face amount).

Prior to April 1, 2019, 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 March 31, 2019). On and after April 1, 2019, 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 Prospectus

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 prospectus includes this prospectus supplement and the accompanying documents listed below. This prospectus supplement constitutes a supplement to the documents listed below and should be read in conjunction with such documents:

Prospectus supplement dated July 10, 2017

Prospectus dated July 10, 2017

The information in this prospectus supplement 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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SUMMARY INFORMATION

We refer to the notes we are offering by this prospectus supplement as the “offered notes” or the “notes”. Each of the offered notes has the terms described below and under “Specific Terms of Your Notes” on page S-21. Please note that in this prospectus supplement, 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, and references to the “accompanying prospectus supplement” mean the accompanying prospectus supplement, dated July 10, 2017, for Medium-Term Notes, Series E, in each case of GS Finance Corp. and The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. References to the “indenture” in this prospectus supplement mean 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 Thesis

The notes are designed for investors who:

believe that the closing level of at least one index will decline, such that the final index level of at least one index will be less than its initial index level, but not by more than 30%, on each coupon determination date;

believe that the closing level of each index will not decline by more than 30% relative to its initial index level on any trading day during the measurement period; and

want to receive a quarterly contingent coupon at an above current market rate if, on the related coupon determination date, the closing level of each index is greater than or equal to 70% of its initial index level, in exchange for bearing the risk of:

o receiving few or no quarterly coupons;

o receiving a maturity payment that in the best case will equal the face amount of the notes (plus a coupon payment)

o and that in the worst case will result in a complete loss of principal (and no coupon payment); and

o having the notes automatically called prior to the stated maturity date if, on any call observation date, the closing level of each index is greater than or equal to its initial index level.

Coupon determination dates (and, therefore, the call observation dates), on which date it is determined if you receive a coupon (and whether or not your notes are called), occur once quarterly. However, the measurement period, during which period it will be determined if your principal is at risk, is every trading day from but excluding the trade date to and including the determination date.

If the notes have not been called and (i) the index return of each index is greater than or equal to 0%, or (ii) the closing level of each index has not declined by more than 30% relative to its initial index level on any trading day during the measurement period, at maturity investors will receive the face amount of their notes plus the final coupon.

If the notes have not been called and the index return of any index is less than -30%, at maturity investors will be fully exposed on a one-to-one basis to the decline of the index with the lowest index return and will receive less than 70% of the face amount of their notes and no coupon.

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If the notes have not been called and (i) the closing level of any index declined by more than 30% relative to its initial index level on any trading day during the measurement period (referred to throughout this prospectus supplement as a “Trigger Event”) and (ii) the index return of the lesser performing index is between 0% and -30% and, for the avoidance of doubt, the index return of each index is greater than or equal to -30%, at maturity investors will be fully exposed on a one-to-one basis to the decline of the lesser performing index. Although investors will receive the final coupon, this will be offset by a maturity payment that is less than the face amount of their notes.

Key Terms

Issuer: GS Finance Corp.

Guarantor: The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Indices: the S&P 500[®] Index (Bloomberg symbol, “SPX Index”), as published by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, the EURO STOXX 50[®] Index (Bloomberg symbol, “SX5E Index”), as published by STOXX Limited and the Russell 2000[®] Index (Bloomberg symbol, “RTY Index”), as published by FTSE Russell; see “The Indices” on page S-31

Specified currency: U.S. dollars (“\$”)

Face amount: each note will have a face amount equal to \$1,000; \$726,000 in the aggregate for all the offered notes; the aggregate face amount of the offered notes may be increased if the issuer, at its sole option, decides to sell an additional amount of the offered notes on a date subsequent to the date of this prospectus supplement

Denominations: \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof

Purchase at amount other than face amount: the amount we will pay you for your notes on a call payment date or the stated maturity date, as the case may be, will not be adjusted based on the issue price you pay for your notes, so if you acquire notes at a premium (or discount) to face amount and hold them to a call payment date or the stated maturity date, it could affect your investment in a number of ways. The return on your investment in such notes will be lower (or higher) than it would have been had you purchased the notes at face amount. See “Additional Risk Factors Specific to Your Notes — If You Purchase Your Notes at a Premium to Face Amount, the Return on Your Investment Will Be Lower Than the Return on Notes Purchased at Face Amount and the Impact of Certain Key Terms of the Notes Will Be Negatively Affected” on page S-14 of this prospectus supplement

Supplemental discussion of U.S. federal income tax consequences: you will be obligated pursuant to the terms of the notes — in the absence of a change in law, an administrative determination or a judicial ruling to the contrary — to characterize each note for all tax purposes as an income-bearing pre-paid derivative contract in respect of the indices, as described under “Supplemental Discussion of Federal Income Tax Consequences” herein. Pursuant to this approach, it is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP that it is likely that any coupon payment will be taxed as ordinary income in accordance with your regular method of accounting for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If you are a United States alien holder of the notes, we intend to withhold on coupon payments made to you at a 30% rate or at a lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty. In addition, upon the sale, exchange, redemption or maturity of your notes, it would be reasonable for you to recognize capital gain or loss equal to the difference, if any, between the amount of cash you receive at such time (excluding amounts attributable to any coupon payment) and your tax basis in your notes.

Automatic call feature: if, as measured on any call observation date, the closing level of each index is greater than or equal to its initial index level, your notes will be automatically called; if your notes are automatically called on any call observation date, on the corresponding call payment date, in addition to the coupon then due, you will receive an amount in cash equal to \$1,000 for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes

Cash settlement amount (on any call payment date): if your notes are automatically called on a call observation date because the closing level of each index is greater than or equal to its initial index level, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, on the related call payment date, we will pay you an amount in cash equal to the sum of (i) \$1,000 plus (ii) the coupon then due

Cash settlement amount (on the stated maturity date): if your notes are not automatically called, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, we will pay you on the stated maturity date an amount in cash equal to:

- If a trigger event has not occurred, \$1,000, plus a coupon payment; and
- If a trigger event has occurred, either:

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o If the index return of each index is greater than or equal to zero, \$1,000, plus a coupon payment.

If the index return of any index is negative, (a) \$1,000, plus (b) \$1,000 multiplied by the lesser performing index return, plus a coupon payment if the final index level of each index is greater than or equal to the coupon trigger level on the final coupon determination date. You could lose a significant portion of the face amount of your notes and not receive any coupon payment.

Lesser performing index return: the index return of the lesser performing index

Lesser performing index: the index with the lowest index return

Coupon: subject to the automatic call feature, on each coupon payment date, for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes, we will pay you an amount in cash equal to:

· if the closing level of each index on the related coupon determination date is greater than or equal to its coupon trigger level, \$17.125; or

· if the closing level of any index on the related coupon determination date is less than its coupon trigger level, \$0

Initial index level: 2,915.56 with respect to the S&P 500® Index, 3,419.78 with respect to the EURO STOXX 50® Index and 1,708.805 with respect to the Russell 2000® Index

Final index level: with respect to each index, the closing level of such index on the determination date, except in the limited circumstances described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Consequences of a Market Disruption Event or a Non-Trading Day” on page S-25

Coupon trigger level: 2,040.892 with respect to the S&P 500® Index, 2,393.846 with respect to the EURO STOXX 50® Index and 1,196.1635 with respect to the Russell 2000® Index (in each case, 70% of its initial index level)

Closing level: with respect to each index on any trading day, the closing level of such index, as further described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Special Calculation Provisions — Closing Level” on page S-27

Index return: with respect to each index on the determination date, the quotient of (i) the final index level minus the initial index level divided by (ii) the initial index level, expressed as a positive or negative percentage

Measurement period: the period from but excluding the trade date to and including the determination date, excluding any date or dates on which the calculation agent determines that a market disruption event with respect to any index occurs or is continuing or that the calculation agent determines is not a trading day with respect to any index

Trigger event: the closing level of any index has declined, as compared to its initial index level, by more than the trigger buffer amount on any trading day during the measurement period

Trigger buffer amount: 30%

Defeasance: not applicable

No listing: the offered notes will not be listed or displayed on any securities exchange or interdealer market quotation system

Business day: as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Special Calculation Provisions — Business Day” on page S-27

Trading day: as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Special Calculation Provisions — Trading Day” on page S-27

Trade date: September 25, 2018

Original issue date (settlement date): September 28, 2018

Stated maturity date: April 1, 2020, subject to adjustment as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Stated Maturity Date” on page S-23

Determination date: March 25, 2020, subject to adjustment as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Determination Date” on page S-23

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Call observation dates: each coupon determination date commencing in March 2019 and ending in December 2019, subject to adjustment as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Payment of Principal on Stated Maturity Date — Call Observation Dates” on page S-24

Call payment dates: the fifth business day after each call observation date subject to adjustment as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Call Payment Dates” on page S-25

Coupon determination dates: the 25th day of each March, June, September and December, commencing in December 2018 and ending in March 2020, subject to adjustment as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Coupon Determination Dates” on page S-24

Coupon payment dates: the fifth business day after each coupon determination date to and including the stated maturity date, subject to adjustment as described under “Specific Terms of Your Notes — Coupon and Coupon Payment Dates” on page S-24

Regular record dates: the scheduled business day immediately preceding the day on which payment is to be made

Calculation agent: Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (“GS&Co.”)

CUSIP no.: 40055QWH1

ISIN no.: US40055QWH19

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

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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 are intended merely to illustrate (i) the impact that various hypothetical closing levels of the indices on a coupon determination date could have on the coupon payable on the related coupon payment date and (ii) the impact that various hypothetical closing levels of the lesser performing index on the determination date could have on the cash settlement amount at maturity assuming all other variables remain constant. The examples below are based on a range of index levels that are entirely hypothetical; no one can predict what the index level of any index will be on any day throughout the life of your notes, what the closing level of any index will be on any coupon determination date or call observation date, as the case may be, and what the final index level of the lesser performing index will be on the determination date. The indices have been highly volatile in the past — meaning that the index levels have changed substantially in relatively short periods — and their performance cannot be predicted for any future period.

The information in the following examples reflects the hypothetical rates of return on the offered notes assuming that they are purchased on the original issue date at the face amount and held to a call payment date or the stated maturity date. If you sell your notes in a secondary market prior to a call payment date or the stated maturity date, as the case may be, 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 indices, the creditworthiness of GS Finance Corp., as issuer, and the creditworthiness of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., as guarantor. In addition, the estimated value of your notes at the time the terms of your notes are set on the trade date (as determined by reference to pricing models used by GS&Co.) is less than the original issue price of your notes. For more information on the estimated value of your notes, see “Additional Risk Factors Specific to Your Notes — The Estimated Value of Your Notes At the Time the Terms of Your Notes Are Set On the Trade Date (as Determined By Reference to Pricing Models Used By GS&Co.) Is Less Than the Original Issue Price Of Your Notes” on page S-11 of this prospectus supplement. The information in the examples also reflect the key terms and assumptions in the box below.

Key Terms and Assumptions

Face amount	\$1,000
Initial index level of the S&P 500® Index	2,915.56
Initial index level of the EURO STOXX 50® Index	3,419.78
Initial index level of the Russell 2000® Index	1,708.805
Coupon	\$17.125
Trigger buffer amount	30%

The notes are not automatically called, unless otherwise indicated below

Neither a market disruption event nor a non-trading day occurs on any originally scheduled coupon determination date or call observation date or the originally scheduled determination date

No change in or affecting any of the index stocks or the method by which the applicable index sponsor calculates any index

Notes purchased on original issue date at the face amount and held to a call payment date or the stated maturity date

For these reasons, the actual performance of the indices over the life of your notes, the actual index levels on any call observation date or coupon determination date, as well as the coupon payable, if any, on each coupon payment date, may bear little relation to the hypothetical examples shown below or to the historical index levels shown elsewhere in this prospectus supplement. For information about the index levels during recent periods, see “The Indices — Historical Closing Levels of the Indices” on page S-51. Before investing in the notes, you should consult publicly available information to determine the index levels between the date of this prospectus supplement and the date of your purchase of the notes.

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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 index stocks.

Hypothetical Coupon Payments

The examples below show hypothetical performances of each index as well as the hypothetical coupons, if any, that we would pay on each coupon payment date with respect to each \$1,000 face amount of the notes if the closing level of each index on the applicable coupon determination date were the hypothetical closing levels shown and the coupon trigger levels (in each case, 70% of the respective initial index level) were 2,040.892, 2,393.846 and 1,196.1635 for the S&P 500[®] Index, the EURO STOXX 50[®] Index and the Russell 2000[®] Index, respectively.

Scenario 1

Hypothetical Coupon Determination Date	Hypothetical Closing Level of the S&P 500 [®] Index	Hypothetical Closing Level of the EURO STOXX 50 [®] Index	Hypothetical Closing Level of the Russell 2000 [®] Index	Hypothetical Coupon
First	900	3,200	1,800	\$0
Second	2,100	3,700	1,300	\$17.125
Third	2,500	2,000	400	\$0
Fourth	3,000	3,000	1,200	\$17.125
Fifth	900	2,800	1,000	\$0
Sixth	1,100	1,700	900	\$0
			Total Hypothetical Coupons	\$34.25

In Scenario 1, the hypothetical closing level of each index increases and decreases by varying amounts on each hypothetical coupon determination date. Because the hypothetical closing level of each index on the second and fourth hypothetical coupon determination dates is greater than or equal to its coupon trigger level, the total of the hypothetical coupons in Scenario 1 is \$34.25. Because the hypothetical closing level of at least one index on all other coupon determination dates is less than its coupon trigger level, no further coupons will be paid, including at maturity.

Scenario 2

Hypothetical Coupon Determination Date	Hypothetical Closing Level of the S&P 500 [®] Index	Hypothetical Closing Level of the EURO STOXX 50 [®] Index	Hypothetical Closing Level of the Russell 2000 [®] Index	Hypothetical Coupon
First	2,100	3,200	400	\$0
Second	3,000	3,700	450	\$0
Third	2,000	2,000	425	\$0
Fourth	1,900	3,000	450	\$0
Fifth	800	2,800	1,800	\$0
Sixth	1,200	1,700	1,000	\$0
			Total Hypothetical Coupons	\$0

In Scenario 2, the hypothetical closing level of each index increases and decreases by varying amounts on each hypothetical coupon determination date. Because in each case the hypothetical closing level of at least one index on the related coupon determination date is less than its coupon trigger level, you will not receive a coupon payment on the applicable hypothetical coupon payment date. Since this occurs on every hypothetical coupon determination date, the overall return you earn on your notes will be less than zero. Therefore, the total of the hypothetical coupons in Scenario 2 is \$0.

Scenario 3

Hypothetical Coupon Determination Date	Hypothetical Closing Level of the S&P 500 [®] Index	Hypothetical Closing Level of the EURO STOXX 50 [®] Index	Hypothetical Closing Level of the Russell 2000 [®] Index	Hypothetical Coupon
First	1,500	2,400	800	\$0
Second	3,000	3,700	1,800	\$17.125

Total Hypothetical
Coupons \$17.125

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In Scenario 3, the hypothetical closing level of each index is less than its coupon trigger level on the first hypothetical coupon determination date, but increases to a level that is greater than its initial index level on the second hypothetical coupon determination date. Because the hypothetical closing level of each index is greater than or equal to its initial index level on the second hypothetical coupon determination date (which is also the first hypothetical call observation date), your notes will be automatically called. Therefore, on the corresponding hypothetical call payment date, in addition to the hypothetical coupon of \$17.125, you will receive an amount in cash equal to \$1,000 for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes.

Hypothetical Payment at Maturity

If the notes are not automatically called on any call observation date (i.e., on each call observation date the closing level of any index is less than its initial index level), the cash settlement amount we would deliver for each \$1,000 face amount of your notes on the stated maturity date will depend on the performance of the lesser performing index on the determination date, as shown in the table below. The table below assumes that the notes have not been automatically called on a call observation date, does not include the final coupon, if any, and reflects hypothetical cash settlement amounts that you could receive on the stated maturity date. If the final index level of the lesser performing index (as a percentage of the initial index level) is less than 70%, you will not be paid a final coupon at maturity. The levels in the left column of the table below represent hypothetical final index levels of the lesser performing index and are expressed as percentages of the initial index level of the lesser performing index. The amounts in the middle column represent the hypothetical cash settlement amounts, based on the corresponding hypothetical final index level of the lesser performing index (expressed as a percentage of the initial index level of the lesser performing index), assuming that a trigger event does not occur (