

GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC
Form 424B2
January 20, 2015
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Registration Statement No. 333-198735

The information in this preliminary pricing supplement is not complete and may be changed. This preliminary pricing supplement is not an offer to sell nor does it seek an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion. Dated January 20, 2015.

\$

The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Callable Step-Up Fixed Rate Notes due 2025

We will pay you interest semi-annually on your notes at a rate of 2.50% per annum from and including January 1, 2015 to but excluding January 1, 2018. We will pay you interest semi-annually on your notes at a rate of 2.75% per annum from and including January 1, 2018 to but excluding January 1, 2020. We will pay you interest semi-annually on your notes at a rate of 3.00% per annum from and including January 1, 2020 to but excluding January 1, 2022. We will pay you interest semi-annually on your notes at a rate of 3.50% per annum from and including January 1, 2022 to but excluding January 1, 2023. We will pay you interest semi-annually on your notes at a rate of 5.00% per annum from and including January 1, 2023 to but excluding January 1, 2024. We will pay you interest semi-annually on your notes at a rate of 7.00% per annum from and including January 1, 2024 to but excluding the stated maturity date (January 1, 2025). Interest will be paid on each January 1 and July 1. The first such payment will be made on July 1, 2015.

In addition, we may redeem the notes at our option, in whole but not in part, on each January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1 on or after January 1, 2016, upon five business days prior notice, at a redemption price equal to 100% of the outstanding principal amount plus accrued and unpaid interest to but excluding the redemption date. Although the interest rate will step up during the life of your notes, you may not benefit from such increase in the interest rate if your notes are redeemed prior to the stated maturity date.

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	Per Note	Total
Initial price to public*	%	\$
Underwriting discount*	%	\$
Proceeds, before expenses, to The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.	%	\$

* The initial price to public will vary between % and 100% for certain investors; see Supplemental Plan of Distribution on page PS-6.

The initial price to public set forth above does not include accrued interest, if any. Interest on the notes will accrue from January , 2015 and must be paid by the purchaser if the notes are delivered after January , 2015. In addition to offers and sales at the initial price to public, the underwriters and/or dealers may offer the notes from time to time for sale in one or more transactions at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to market prices or at negotiated prices.

The return (whether positive or negative) on your investment in notes will depend in part on the issue price you pay for such notes.

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

Goldman, Sachs & Co.

Pricing Supplement No. dated January , 2015.

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About Your Prospectus

The notes are part of the Medium-Term Notes, Series D program of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. This prospectus includes this pricing supplement and the accompanying documents listed below. This pricing supplement constitutes a supplement to the documents listed below and should be read in conjunction with such documents:

Prospectus supplement dated September 15, 2014

Prospectus dated September 15, 2014

The information in this pricing 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.

Table of Contents**SPECIFIC TERMS OF THE NOTES**

*Please note that in this section entitled **Specific Terms of the Notes**, references to **The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.**, **we**, **our** and **us** mean only **The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.** and do not include any of its consolidated subsidiaries. Also, in this section, references to **holders** mean **The Depository Trust Company (DTC)** or its nominee and not indirect owners who own beneficial interests in notes through participants in **DTC**. Please review the special considerations that apply to indirect owners in the accompanying prospectus, under **Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance**.*

*This pricing supplement no. [redacted] dated January [redacted], 2015 (pricing supplement) and the accompanying prospectus dated September 15, 2014 (accompanying prospectus), relating to the notes, should be read together. Because the notes are part of a series of our debt securities called **Medium-Term Notes, Series D**, this pricing supplement and the accompanying prospectus should also be read with the accompanying prospectus supplement, dated September 15, 2014 (accompanying prospectus supplement). Terms used but not defined in this pricing supplement have the meanings given them in the accompanying prospectus or accompanying prospectus supplement, unless the context requires otherwise.*

The notes are part of a separate series of our debt securities under our Medium-Term Notes, Series D program governed by our Senior Debt Indenture, dated as of July 16, 2008, between us and The Bank of New York Mellon, as trustee. This pricing supplement summarizes specific terms that will apply to your notes. The terms of the notes described here supplement those described in the accompanying prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus and, if the terms described here are inconsistent with those described there, the terms described here are controlling.

Terms of the Callable Step-Up Fixed Rate Notes due 2025

Issuer: The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Principal amount: \$

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

Type of Notes: Fixed rate notes (notes)

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

Trade date:

Original issue date: January [redacted], 2015

Stated maturity date: January [redacted], 2025

Interest rate: 2.50% per annum from and including January [redacted], 2015 to but excluding January [redacted], 2018; 2.75% per annum from and including January [redacted], 2018 to but excluding January [redacted], 2020; 3.00% per annum from and including January [redacted], 2020 to but excluding January [redacted], 2022; 3.50% per annum from and including January [redacted], 2022 to but excluding January [redacted], 2023; 5.00% per annum from and including January [redacted], 2023 to but excluding January [redacted], 2024; 7.00% per annum from and including January [redacted], 2024 to but excluding January [redacted], 2025

Supplemental discussion of U.S. federal income tax consequences: Subject to the discussion set forth in the section referenced below regarding short-term debt securities, it is the opinion of Sidley Austin LLP that interest on a note will be taxable to a U.S. holder as ordinary interest income at the time it accrues or is received in accordance with the U.S. holder's normal method of accounting for tax purposes (regardless of whether we call the notes). Upon the disposition of a note by sale, exchange, redemption or retirement (i.e., if we exercise our right to call the notes or otherwise) or other disposition, a U.S. holder will generally recognize capital gain or loss equal to the difference, if any,

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between (i) the amount realized on the disposition (other than amounts attributable to accrued but unpaid interest, which would be treated as such) and (ii) the U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in the note.

Interest payment dates: January and July of each year, commencing on July , 2015 and ending on the stated maturity date

Regular record dates: for interest due on an interest payment date, the day immediately prior to the day on which payment is to be made (as such payment day may be adjusted under the applicable business day convention specified below)

Day count convention: 30/360

Business day: New York

Business day convention: following unadjusted

Redemption at option of issuer before stated maturity: We may redeem the notes at our option, in whole but not in part, on each January , April , July and October on or after January , 2016, upon five business days prior notice, at a redemption price equal to 100% of the outstanding principal amount plus accrued and unpaid interest to but excluding the redemption date

Listing: None

ERISA: as described under Employee Retirement Income Security Act on page 118 of the accompanying prospectus

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CUSIP no.: 38147QSC1

ISIN no.: US38147QSC14

Form of notes: Your notes will be issued in book-entry form and represented by a master global note. You should read the section **Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance** in the accompanying prospectus for more information about notes issued in book-entry form

Defeasance applies as follows:

full defeasance *i.e.*, our right to be relieved of all our obligations on the note by placing funds in trust for the holder: yes

covenant defeasance *i.e.*, our right to be relieved of specified provisions of the note by placing funds in trust for the holder: yes

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

Calculation Agent: Goldman, Sachs & Co.

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.

Table of Contents**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE NOTES*****Book-Entry System***

We will issue the notes as a master global note registered in the name of DTC, or its nominee. The sale of the notes will settle in immediately available funds through DTC. You will not be permitted to withdraw the notes from DTC except in the limited situations described in the accompanying prospectus under *Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance* *What Is a Global Security?* *Holder's Option to Obtain a Non-Global Security*; *Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated*. Investors may hold interests in a master global note through organizations that participate, directly or indirectly, in the DTC system.

In addition to this pricing supplement, the following provisions are hereby incorporated into the global master note: the description of the 30/360 day count convention appearing under *Description of Debt Securities We May Offer* *Calculations of Interest on Debt Securities* *Interest Rates and Interest* in the accompanying prospectus, the description of New York business day appearing under *Description of Debt Securities We May Offer* *Calculations of Interest on Debt Securities* *Business Days* in the accompanying prospectus, the description of the following unadjusted business day convention appearing under *Description of Debt Securities We May Offer* *Calculations of Interest on Debt Securities* *Business Day Conventions* in the accompanying prospectus and the section *Description of Debt Securities We May Offer* *Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance* in the accompanying prospectus.

When We Can Redeem the Notes

We will be permitted to redeem the notes at our option before their stated maturity, as described below. The notes will not be entitled to the benefit of any sinking fund—that is, we will not deposit money on a regular basis into any separate custodial account to repay your note. In addition, you will not be entitled to require us to buy your note from you before its stated maturity.

We will have the right to redeem the notes at our option, in whole but not in part, on each January, April, July and October on or after January, 2016, at a redemption price equal to 100% of the outstanding principal amount plus accrued and unpaid interest to but excluding the redemption date. We will provide not less than five business days' prior notice in the manner described under *Description of Debt Securities We May Offer* *Notices* in the attached prospectus. If the redemption notice is given and funds deposited as required, then interest will cease to accrue on and after the redemption date on the notes. If any redemption date is not a business day, we will pay the redemption price on the next business day without any interest or other payment due to the delay.

What are the Tax Consequences of the Notes

You should carefully consider, among other things, the matters set forth under *United States Taxation* in the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The following discussion summarizes certain of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of the purchase, beneficial ownership, and disposition of each of the notes. This summary supplements the section *United States Taxation* in the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and is subject to the limitations and exceptions set forth therein.

As of the original issue date, the notes should not be treated as issued with original issue discount (OID) despite the fact that the interest rate on the notes is scheduled to step-up over the term of the notes because Treasury regulations generally deem an issuer to exercise a call option in a manner that minimizes the yield on the debt instrument for purposes of determining whether a debt instrument is issued with OID. The yield on the notes would be minimized if we call the notes immediately before the increase in the interest rate on January, 2018 and therefore the notes should be treated as maturing on such date for OID purposes. This assumption is made solely for purposes of determining whether the notes are issued with OID for U.S. federal income tax purposes, and is not an indication of our intention to call or not to call the notes at any time. If we do not call the notes prior to the increase in the interest rate then, solely for OID purposes, the notes will be deemed to be reissued at their adjusted issue price on January, 2018. This deemed issuance should not give rise to taxable gain or loss to holders. The same analysis would apply to the increase in the interest rate on January, 2020, January, 2022, January, 2023 and January, 2024. If the notes are not called on the interest payment date occurring on January, 2024 then, because the period between the interest payment date on January, 2024 and the stated maturity date of the notes is one year or less, the notes, upon their deemed reissuance on January, 2024, could be treated as short-term debt securities for OID purposes (but not for purposes of determining the holding period of your notes). For a discussion of the U.S. federal income tax consequences to a U.S. holder of owning short-term debt securities, please review the section entitled *United States Taxation* *Taxation of Debt Securities* *United States Holders* *Short-Term Debt Securities* in the accompanying prospectus.

Under this approach, and subject to the discussion above regarding short-term debt securities, interest on a note will be taxable to a U.S. holder as ordinary interest income at the time it accrues or is received in accordance with the U.S. holder's normal method of accounting for tax

purposes (regardless of whether we call the notes).

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Upon the disposition of a note by sale, exchange, redemption or retirement (i.e., if we exercise our right to call the notes or otherwise) or other disposition, a U.S. holder will generally recognize capital gain or loss equal to the difference, if any, between (i) the amount realized on the disposition (other than amounts attributable to accrued but unpaid interest, which would be treated as such) and (ii) the U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in the note. A U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in a note generally will equal the cost of the note (net of accrued interest) to the U.S. holder. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to significant limitations.

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 FATCA withholding. However, according to final Treasury regulations, the withholding tax described above will not apply to payments of gross proceeds from the sale, exchange, redemption or other disposition of the notes made before January 1, 2017.

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The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. expects to agree to sell to Goldman, Sachs & Co., and Goldman, Sachs & Co. expects to agree to purchase from The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., the aggregate principal amount of the offered notes specified on the front cover of this pricing supplement. Goldman, Sachs & Co. proposes initially to offer the notes to the public at the initial price to public set forth on the cover page of this pricing supplement, and to certain securities dealers at such price less a concession not in excess of % of the face amount. The original issue price for notes purchased by certain fee-based advisory accounts will vary between % and 100% of the face amount of the notes. Any sale of a note to a fee-based advisory account at an original issue price below 100% of the face amount will reduce the underwriting discount specified on the cover of this prospectus supplement with respect to such note. The original issue price paid by any fee-based advisory account will be reduced by the amount of any fees assessed by the securities dealer or dealers involved in the sale of the notes to such advisory account, but not by more than % of the face amount of the notes. If all of the offered notes are not sold at the initial price to public, the underwriters and/or dealers may change the offering price and the other selling terms. In addition to offers and sales at the initial price to public, the underwriters and/or dealers may offer the notes from time to time for sale in one or more transactions at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to market prices or at negotiated prices.

In the future, Goldman, Sachs & Co. or other affiliates of The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. may repurchase and resell the offered notes in market-making transactions, with resales being made at prices related to prevailing market prices at the time of resale or at negotiated prices. The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. estimates that its share of the total offering expenses, excluding underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately \$. For more information about the plan of distribution and possible market-making activities, see Plan of Distribution in the accompanying prospectus.

We expect to deliver the notes against payment therefor in New York, New York on January , 2015, which is expected to be the third scheduled business day following the date of this pricing supplement and of the pricing of the notes.

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State) with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that Relevant Member State (the Relevant Implementation Date) an offer of the offered notes which are the subject of the offering contemplated by this pricing supplement in relation thereto may not be made to the public in that Relevant Member State except that, with effect from and including the Relevant Implementation Date, an offer of such offered notes may be made to the public in that Relevant Member State:

- a) at any time to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined in the Prospectus Directive;
- b) at any time to fewer than 100 or, if the Relevant Member State has implemented the relevant provision of the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150, natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive), subject to obtaining the prior consent of the relevant dealer or dealers nominated by the Issuer for any such offer; or
- c) at any time in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of offered notes shall require the Issuer or any dealer to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an offer of notes to the public in relation to any notes in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the notes to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe the notes, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State. The expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the Relevant Member State) and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State and the expression 2010 PD Amending Directive means Directive 2010/73/EU.

Goldman, Sachs & Co. has represented and agreed that:

- (a) in relation to any notes that have a maturity of less than one year (i) it is a person whose ordinary activities involve it in acquiring, holding, managing or disposing of investments (as principal or agent) for the purposes of its business and (ii) it has not offered or sold and will not offer

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or sell any notes other than to persons whose ordinary activities involve them in acquiring, holding, managing or disposing of investments (as principal or agent) for the purposes of their businesses or who it is reasonable to expect will acquire, hold, manage or dispose of investments (as principal or agent) for the purposes of their businesses where the issue of the offered notes would otherwise constitute a contravention of Section 19 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (the FSMA) by The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.;

(b) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the offered notes in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.; and

(c) it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to the notes in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

No advertisement, invitation or document relating to the notes may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), if such advertisement, invitation or document is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the securities laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to the offered notes which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside of Hong Kong or only to professional investors as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder.

The offered notes have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act of Japan (Act No. 25 of 1948, as amended), or the FIEA. The offered notes may not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (including any person resident in Japan or any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan) or to others for reoffering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to or for the benefit of any resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of the FIEA and otherwise in compliance with any relevant laws, and regulations of Japan.

This pricing supplement, along with the accompanying prospectus supplement and prospectus have not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this pricing supplement, along with the accompanying prospectus supplement and prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the offered notes may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the offered notes be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor (as defined in Section 4A of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA)) under Section 274 of the SFA, (ii) to a relevant person (as defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA) pursuant to Section 275(1) of the SFA, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A) of the SFA, and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA, in each case subject to conditions set forth in the SFA.

Where the offered notes are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is a corporation (which is not an accredited investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA)) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor, the securities (as defined in Section 239(1) of the SFA) of that corporation shall not be transferred except: (1) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person (as defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA), (2) where such transfer arises from an offer in that corporation's securities pursuant to Section 275(1A) of the SFA, (3) where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer, (4) as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA, or (5) as specified in Regulation 32 of the Securities and Futures (Offers of Investments) (Shares and Debentures) Regulations 2005 of Singapore (Regulation 32).

Where the offered notes are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary of the trust is an accredited investor, the beneficiaries rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferable for six months after that trust has acquired the offered notes under Section 275 of the SFA except: (1) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person (as defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA), (2) where such transfer arises from an offer that is made on terms that such rights or interest are acquired at a consideration of not less than S\$200,000 (or its equivalent in a foreign currency) for each transaction (whether such amount is to be paid for in cash or by exchange of securities or other assets), (3) where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer, (4) where the transfer is by operation of law, (5) as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA, or (6) as specified in Regulation 32.

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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 pricing supplement, 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 pricing supplement, 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 pricing supplement, the accompanying prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is current only as of the respective dates of such documents.

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The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Callable Step-Up Fixed Rate

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Goldman, Sachs & Co.