

MORGAN STANLEY
Form 424B2
December 26, 2018

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

| <i>Title of Each Class of Securities Offered</i> | <i>Maximum Aggregate Offering Price</i> | <i>Amount of Registration Fee</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside Securities due 2022 | \$1,338,000 | \$162.17 |

December 2018

Pricing Supplement No. 1,281

Registration Statement Nos. 333-221595; 333-221595-01

Dated December 21, 2018

Filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Structured Investments

Opportunities in U.S. Equities

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500[®] Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Fully and Unconditionally Guaranteed by Morgan Stanley

Principal at Risk Securities

The Buffered PLUS are unsecured obligations of Morgan Stanley Finance LLC (“MSFL”) and are fully and unconditionally guaranteed by Morgan Stanley. The Buffered PLUS will pay no interest, provide a minimum payment at maturity of only 20% of the stated principal amount and have the terms described in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS, index supplement and prospectus, as supplemented or modified by this document. At maturity, if the underlying index has **appreciated** in value, investors will receive the stated principal amount of their investment plus leveraged upside performance of the underlying index. If the underlying index has **depreciated** in value, but the underlying index has not declined by more than the specified buffer amount, the Buffered PLUS will redeem for par. However, if the underlying index has declined by more than the buffer amount, investors will lose 1% for every 1% decline beyond the specified buffer amount, subject to the minimum payment at maturity of 20% of the stated

principal amount. Investors may lose up to 80% of the stated principal amount of the Buffered PLUS. The Buffered PLUS are for investors who seek an equity index-based return and who are willing to risk their principal and forgo current income in exchange for the leverage and buffer features that in each case apply to a limited range of performance of the underlying index. The Buffered PLUS are notes issued as part of MSFL's Series A Global Medium-Term Notes program.

All payments are subject to our credit risk. If we default on our obligations, you could lose some or all of your investment. These Buffered PLUS are not secured obligations and you will not have any security interest in, or otherwise have any access to, any underlying reference asset or assets.

FINAL Terms

Issuer: Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Guarantor: Morgan Stanley

Maturity date: December 29, 2022

Underlying index: S&P 500[®] Index

Aggregate principal amount: \$1,338,000

If the final index value is greater than the initial index value:

\$1,000 + leveraged upside payment

If the final index value is less than or equal to the initial index value but has decreased from the initial index value by an amount less than or equal to the buffer amount of 20%:

\$1,000

Payment at maturity per Buffered PLUS:

If the final index value is less than the initial index value and has decreased from the initial index value by an amount greater than the buffer amount of 20%:

$(\$1,000 \times \text{the index performance factor}) + \200

Under these circumstances, the payment at maturity will be less than the stated principal amount of \$1,000. However, under no circumstances will the Buffered PLUS pay less than \$200 per Buffered PLUS at maturity.

Leveraged upside payment:

$\$1,000 \times \text{leverage factor} \times \text{index percent increase}$

Index percent increase:

$(\text{final index value} - \text{initial index value}) / \text{initial index value}$

Initial index value:

2,416.62, which is the index closing value on the pricing date

Final index value:

The index closing value on the valuation date

Valuation date:

December 21, 2022, subject to postponement for non-index business days and certain market disruption events

Leverage factor:

121%

Buffer amount:

20%. As a result of the buffer amount of 20%, the value at or above which the underlying index must close on the valuation date so that investors do not suffer a loss on their initial investment in the Buffered PLUS is 1,933.296, which is 80% of the initial index value.

Minimum payment at maturity:

\$200 per Buffered PLUS (20% of the stated principal amount)

Index performance factor:

Final index value *divided* by the initial index value

\$1,000 per Buffered PLUS

Stated principal amount:

Issue price: \$1,000 per Buffered PLUS (see “Commissions and issue price” below)
Pricing date: December 21, 2018
Original issue date: December 31, 2018 (5 business days after the pricing date)
CUSIP: 61768DTK1
ISIN: US61768DTK18
Listing: The Buffered PLUS will not be listed on any securities exchange. Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC (“MS & Co.”), an affiliate of MSFL and a wholly owned subsidiary of Morgan Stanley. See “Supplemental information regarding plan of distribution; conflicts of interest.”
Agent:

Estimated value on the pricing date: \$973.20 per Buffered PLUS. See “Investment Summary” beginning on page 2.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------|-------------|
| Commissions and issue price: | Price to public Agent’s commissions and fees ⁽¹⁾ Proceeds to us ⁽²⁾ | | |
| Per Buffered PLUS | \$1,000 | \$4.00 | \$996.00 |
| Total | \$1,338,000 | \$5,352 | \$1,332,648 |

Reflects a structuring fee payable to selected dealers and their financial advisors by the agent or its affiliates of \$4.00 per Buffered PLUS. MS & Co., the agent, will not receive a sales commission in connection with the Buffered PLUS. See "Supplemental information regarding plan of distribution; conflicts of interest." For additional information, see "Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of Interest)" in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS.

(1) See “Use of proceeds and hedging” on page 13.

The Buffered PLUS involve risks not associated with an investment in ordinary debt securities. See “Risk Factors” beginning on page 7.

The Securities and Exchange Commission and state securities regulators have not approved or disapproved these securities, or determined if this document or the accompanying product supplement, index supplement and prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

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

You should read this document together with the related product supplement, index supplement and prospectus, each of which can be accessed via the hyperlinks below. Please also see “Additional Terms of the Buffered PLUS” and “Additional Information About the Buffered PLUS” at the end of this document.

As used in this document, “we,” “us” and “our” refer to Morgan Stanley or MSFL, or Morgan Stanley and MSFL collectively, as the context requires.

Product Supplement for PLUS dated November 16, 2017

Index Supplement dated November 16,

Prospectus dated November 16, 2017

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

Investment Summary

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside Securities

Principal at Risk Securities

The Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022 (the “Buffered PLUS”) can be used:

§ As an alternative to direct exposure to the underlying index that enhances returns for any potential positive performance of the underlying index

§ To enhance returns and potentially outperform the underlying index in a bullish scenario, with no limitation on the appreciation potential

§ To achieve similar levels of upside exposure to the underlying index as a direct investment, while using fewer dollars by taking advantage of the leverage factor.

§ To obtain a buffer against a specified level of negative performance in the underlying index

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Maturity: | Approximately 4 years |
| Leverage factor: | 121% |
| Maximum payment at maturity: | None |
| Buffer amount: | 20%, with 1-to-1 downside exposure below the buffer |
| Minimum payment at maturity: | \$200 per Buffered PLUS (20% of the stated principal amount). Investors may lose up to 80% of the stated principal amount of the Buffered PLUS. |
| Coupon: | None |

The original issue price of each Buffered PLUS is \$1,000. This price includes costs associated with issuing, selling, structuring and hedging the Buffered PLUS, which are borne by you, and, consequently, the estimated value of the Buffered PLUS on the pricing date is less than \$1,000. We estimate that the value of each Buffered PLUS on the pricing date is \$973.20.

What goes into the estimated value on the pricing date?

In valuing the Buffered PLUS on the pricing date, we take into account that the Buffered PLUS comprise both a debt component and a performance-based component linked to the underlying index. The estimated value of the Buffered PLUS is determined using our own pricing and valuation models, market inputs and assumptions relating to the underlying index, instruments based on the underlying index, volatility and other factors including current and expected interest rates, as well as an interest rate related to our secondary market credit spread, which is the implied interest rate at which our conventional fixed rate debt trades in the secondary market.

What determines the economic terms of the Buffered PLUS?

In determining the economic terms of the Buffered PLUS, including the leverage factor, the buffer amount and the minimum payment at maturity, we use an internal funding rate, which is likely to be lower than our secondary market credit spreads and therefore advantageous to us. If the issuing, selling, structuring and hedging costs borne by you were lower or if the internal funding rate were higher, one or more of the economic terms of the Buffered PLUS would be more favorable to you.

What is the relationship between the estimated value on the pricing date and the secondary market price of the Buffered PLUS?

The price at which MS & Co. purchases the Buffered PLUS in the secondary market, absent changes in market conditions, including those related to the underlying index, may vary from, and be lower than, the estimated value on the pricing date, because the secondary market price takes into account our secondary market credit spread as well as the bid-offer spread that MS & Co. would charge in a secondary market transaction of this type and other factors. However, because the costs associated with issuing, selling, structuring and hedging the Buffered PLUS are not fully deducted upon issuance, for a period of up to 6 months following the issue date, to the extent that MS & Co. may buy or sell the Buffered PLUS in the secondary market, absent changes in market conditions,

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

including those related to the underlying index, and to our secondary market credit spreads, it would do so based on values higher than the estimated value. We expect that those higher values will also be reflected in your brokerage account statements.

MS & Co. may, but is not obligated to, make a market in the Buffered PLUS, and, if it once chooses to make a market, may cease doing so at any time.

December 2018 Page 3

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

Key Investment Rationale

The Buffered PLUS offer leveraged upside exposure to the underlying index, while providing limited protection against negative performance of the underlying index. Once the underlying index has decreased in value by more than the specified buffer amount, investors are exposed to the negative performance of the underlying index, subject to the minimum payment at maturity. At maturity, if the underlying index has appreciated, investors will receive the stated principal amount of their investment plus leveraged upside performance of the underlying index. At maturity, if the underlying index has depreciated and (i) if the final index value of the underlying index has not declined from the initial index value by more than the specified buffer amount, the Buffered PLUS will redeem for par, or (ii) if the final index value of the underlying index has declined by more than the buffer amount, the investor will lose 1% for every 1% decline beyond the specified buffer amount, subject to the minimum payment at maturity. **Investors may lose up to 80% of the stated principal amount of the Buffered PLUS.**

Leveraged Performance The Buffered PLUS offer investors an opportunity to capture enhanced returns for any positive performance relative to a direct investment in the underlying index.

Upside Scenario The underlying index increases in value, and, at maturity, the Buffered PLUS redeem for the stated principal amount of \$1,000 plus 121% of the index percent increase.

Par Scenario The underlying index declines in value by no more than 20%, and, at maturity, the Buffered PLUS redeem for the stated principal amount of \$1,000.

Downside Scenario The underlying index declines in value by more than 20%, and, at maturity, the Buffered PLUS redeem for less than the stated principal amount by an amount that is proportionate to the percentage decrease of the underlying index from the initial index value, plus the buffer amount of 20%. (Example: if the underlying index decreases in value by 45%, the Buffered PLUS will redeem for \$750.00, or 75.00% of the stated principal amount.) The minimum payment at maturity is \$200 per Buffered PLUS.

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

How the Buffered PLUS Work

Payoff Diagram

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

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stated principal amount: | \$1,000 per Buffered PLUS |
| Leverage factor: | 121% |
| Buffer amount: | 20% |
| Maximum payment at maturity: | None |
| Minimum payment at maturity: | \$200 per Buffered PLUS |

Buffered PLUS Payoff Diagram

How it works

§ **Upside Scenario.** If the final index value is greater than the initial index value, investors will receive the \$1,000 stated principal amount *plus* 121% of the appreciation of the underlying index over the term of the Buffered PLUS.

§ If the underlying index appreciates 2%, the investor would receive a 2.42% return, or \$1,024.20 per Buffered PLUS.

§ **Par Scenario.** If the final index value is less than or equal to the initial index value but has decreased from the initial § index value by an amount less than or equal to the buffer amount of 20%, investors will receive the stated principal amount of \$1,000 per Buffered PLUS.

§ If the underlying index depreciates 5%, investors will receive the \$1,000 stated principal amount.

§

Downside Scenario. If the final index value is less than the initial index value and has decreased from the initial index value by an amount greater than the buffer amount of 20%, investors will receive an amount that is less than the stated principal amount by an amount that is proportionate to the percentage decrease of the value of the underlying index from the initial index value, plus the buffer amount of 20%. The minimum payment at maturity is \$200 per Buffered PLUS.

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

For example, if the underlying index depreciates 55%, investors would lose 35.00% of their principal and receive only \$650 per Buffered PLUS at maturity, or 65.00% of the stated principal amount.

December 2018 Page 6

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

Risk Factors

The following is a non-exhaustive list of certain key risk factors for investors in the Buffered PLUS. For further discussion of these and other risks, you should read the section entitled “Risk Factors” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS, index supplement and prospectus. We also urge you to consult your investment, legal, tax, accounting and other advisers in connection with your investment in the Buffered PLUS.

Buffered PLUS do not pay interest and provide a minimum payment at maturity of only 20% of your principal. The terms of the Buffered PLUS differ from those of ordinary debt securities in that the Buffered PLUS do not pay interest, and provide a minimum payment at maturity of only 20% of the stated principal amount of the Buffered PLUS, subject to our credit risk. If the final index value is less than 80% of the initial index value, you will receive for each Buffered PLUS that you hold a payment at maturity that is less than the stated principal amount of each Buffered PLUS by an amount proportionate to the decline in the closing value of the underlying index from the initial index value, plus \$200 per Buffered PLUS. **Accordingly, investors may lose up to 80% of the stated principal amount of the Buffered PLUS.**

The market price of the Buffered PLUS will be influenced by many unpredictable factors. Several factors, many of which are beyond our control, will influence the value of the Buffered PLUS in the secondary market and the price at which MS & Co. may be willing to purchase or sell the Buffered PLUS in the secondary market, including the value, volatility (frequency and magnitude of changes in value) and dividend yield of the underlying index, interest and yield rates in the market, time remaining until the Buffered PLUS mature, geopolitical conditions and economic, financial, political, regulatory or judicial events that affect the underlying index or equities markets generally and which may affect the final index value of the underlying index and any actual or anticipated changes in our credit ratings or credit spreads. The value of the underlying index may be, and has recently been, volatile, and we can give you no assurance that the volatility will lessen. See “S&P 500® Index Overview” below. You may receive less, and possibly significantly less, than the stated principal amount per Buffered PLUS if you try to sell your Buffered PLUS prior to maturity.

§ The Buffered PLUS are subject to our credit risk, and any actual or anticipated changes to our credit ratings or credit spreads may adversely affect the market value of the Buffered PLUS. You are dependent on our ability to pay all amounts due on the Buffered PLUS at maturity and therefore you are subject to our credit risk. If we default on our obligations under the Buffered PLUS, your investment would be at risk and you could lose some or all of your investment. As a result, the market value of the Buffered PLUS prior to maturity will be affected by changes in the market’s view of our creditworthiness. Any actual or anticipated decline in our credit ratings or increase in the credit spreads charged by the market for taking our credit risk is likely to adversely affect the market value of the

Buffered PLUS.

As a finance subsidiary, MSFL has no independent operations and will have no independent assets. As a finance subsidiary, MSFL has no independent operations beyond the issuance and administration of its securities and will have no independent assets available for distributions to holders of MSFL securities if they make claims in respect of such securities in a bankruptcy, resolution or similar proceeding. Accordingly, any recoveries by such holders will be limited to those available under the related guarantee by Morgan Stanley and that guarantee will rank § *pari passu* with all other unsecured, unsubordinated obligations of Morgan Stanley. Holders will have recourse only to a single claim against Morgan Stanley and its assets under the guarantee. Holders of securities issued by MSFL should accordingly assume that in any such proceedings they would not have any priority over and should be treated *pari passu* with the claims of other unsecured, unsubordinated creditors of Morgan Stanley, including holders of Morgan Stanley-issued securities.

The amount payable on the Buffered PLUS 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 postponement for non-index business days and certain market disruption events. Even if the value of the underlying index appreciates prior to the valuation date but then drops by the valuation date by more than 20% of the § initial index value, the payment at maturity will be less, and may be significantly less, than it would have been had the payment at maturity been linked to the value of the underlying index prior to such drop. Although the actual value of the underlying index on the stated maturity date or at other times during the term of the Buffered PLUS may be higher than the index closing value on the valuation date, the payment at maturity will be based solely on the index closing value on the valuation date.

Investing in the Buffered PLUS is not equivalent to investing in the underlying index. Investing in the Buffered PLUS is not equivalent to investing in the underlying index or its component stocks. As an investor in the Buffered § PLUS, you will not have voting rights or rights to receive dividends or other distributions or any other rights with respect to stocks that constitute the underlying index.

December 2018 Page 7

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

The rate we are willing to pay for securities of this type, maturity and issuance size is likely to be lower than the rate implied by our secondary market credit spreads and advantageous to us. Both the lower rate and the inclusion of costs associated with issuing, selling, structuring and hedging the Buffered PLUS in the original issue price reduce the economic terms of the Buffered PLUS, cause the estimated value of the Buffered PLUS to be less than the original issue price and will adversely affect secondary market prices. Assuming no change § in market conditions or any other relevant factors, the prices, if any, at which dealers, including MS & Co., may be willing to purchase the Buffered PLUS in secondary market transactions will likely be significantly lower than the original issue price, because secondary market prices will exclude the issuing, selling, structuring and hedging-related costs that are included in the original issue price and borne by you and because the secondary market prices will reflect our secondary market credit spreads and the bid-offer spread that any dealer would charge in a secondary market transaction of this type as well as other factors.

The inclusion of the costs of issuing, selling, structuring and hedging the Buffered PLUS in the original issue price and the lower rate we are willing to pay as issuer make the economic terms of the Buffered PLUS less favorable to you than they otherwise would be.

However, because the costs associated with issuing, selling, structuring and hedging the Buffered PLUS are not fully deducted upon issuance, for a period of up to 6 months following the issue date, to the extent that MS & Co. may buy or sell the Buffered PLUS in the secondary market, absent changes in market conditions, including those related to the underlying index, and to our secondary market credit spreads, it would do so based on values higher than the estimated value, and we expect that those higher values will also be reflected in your brokerage account statements.

Adjustments to the underlying index could adversely affect the value of the Buffered PLUS. The underlying index publisher may add, delete or substitute the stocks constituting the underlying index or make other methodological changes that could change the value of the underlying index. The underlying index publisher may discontinue or suspend calculation or publication of the underlying index at any time. In these circumstances, the calculation agent will have the sole discretion to substitute a successor index that is comparable to the discontinued § underlying index and is not precluded from considering indices that are calculated and published by the calculation agent or any of its affiliates. If the calculation agent determines that there is no appropriate successor index, the payment at maturity on the Buffered PLUS will be an amount based on the closing prices at maturity of the securities composing the underlying index at the time of such discontinuance, without rebalancing or substitution, computed by the calculation agent in accordance with the formula for calculating the underlying index last in effect prior to discontinuance of the underlying index.

§

The estimated value of the Buffered PLUS is determined by reference to our pricing and valuation models, which may differ from those of other dealers and is not a maximum or minimum secondary market price.

These pricing and valuation models are proprietary and rely in part on subjective views of certain market inputs and certain assumptions about future events, which may prove to be incorrect. As a result, because there is no market-standard way to value these types of securities, our models may yield a higher estimated value of the Buffered PLUS than those generated by others, including other dealers in the market, if they attempted to value the Buffered PLUS. In addition, the estimated value on the pricing date does not represent a minimum or maximum price at which dealers, including MS & Co., would be willing to purchase your Buffered PLUS in the secondary market (if any exists) at any time. The value of your Buffered PLUS at any time after the date of this document will vary based on many factors that cannot be predicted with accuracy, including our creditworthiness and changes in market conditions. See also “The market price of the Buffered PLUS will be influenced by many unpredictable factors” above.

The Buffered PLUS will not be listed on any securities exchange and secondary trading may be limited. The Buffered PLUS will not be listed on any securities exchange. Therefore, there may be little or no secondary market for the Buffered PLUS. MS & Co. may, but is not obligated to, make a market in the Buffered PLUS and, if it once chooses to make a market, may cease doing so at any time. When it does make a market, it will generally do so for transactions of routine secondary market size at prices based on its estimate of the current value of the Buffered PLUS, taking into account its bid/offer spread, our credit spreads, market volatility, the notional size of the proposed § sale, the cost of unwinding any related hedging positions, the time remaining to maturity and the likelihood that it will be able to resell the Buffered PLUS. Even if there is a secondary market, it may not provide enough liquidity to allow you to trade or sell the Buffered PLUS easily. Since other broker-dealers may not participate significantly in the secondary market for the Buffered PLUS, the price at which you may be able to trade your Buffered PLUS is likely to depend on the price, if any, at which MS & Co. is willing to transact. If, at any time, MS & Co. were to cease making a market in the Buffered PLUS, it is likely that there would be no secondary market for the Buffered PLUS. Accordingly, you should be willing to hold your Buffered PLUS to maturity.

The calculation agent, which is a subsidiary of Morgan Stanley and an affiliate of MSFL, will make determinations with respect to the Buffered PLUS. As calculation agent, MS & Co. has determined the initial § index value, will determine the final index value and will calculate the amount of cash you receive at maturity. Moreover, certain determinations made by MS & Co.,

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

in its capacity as calculation agent, may require it to exercise discretion and make subjective judgments, such as with respect to the occurrence or non-occurrence of market disruption events and the selection of a successor index or calculation of the final index value in the event of a market disruption event or discontinuance of the underlying index. These potentially subjective determinations may adversely affect the payout to you at maturity. For further information regarding these types of determinations, see “Description of PLUS—Postponement of Valuation Date(s)” and “—Calculation Agent and Calculations” and related definitions in the accompanying product supplement. In addition, MS & Co. has determined the estimated value of the Buffered PLUS on the pricing date.

Hedging and trading activity by our affiliates could potentially adversely affect the value of the Buffered PLUS. One or more of our affiliates and/or third-party dealers have carried out, and will continue to carry out, hedging activities related to the Buffered PLUS (and possibly to other instruments linked to the underlying index or its component stocks), including trading in the stocks that constitute the underlying index as well as in other instruments related to the underlying index. As a result, these entities may be unwinding or adjusting hedge positions during the term of the Buffered PLUS, and the hedging strategy may involve greater and more frequent dynamic adjustments to the hedge as the valuation date approaches. Some of our affiliates also trade the stocks that constitute the underlying index and other financial instruments related to the underlying index on a regular basis as part of their general broker-dealer and other businesses. Any of these hedging or trading activities on or prior to the pricing date could have increased the initial index value, and, therefore, could have increased the value at or above which the underlying index must close on the valuation date so that investors do not suffer a loss on their initial investment in the Buffered PLUS. Additionally, such hedging or trading activities during the term of the Buffered PLUS, including on the valuation date, could adversely affect the closing value of the underlying index on the valuation date, and, accordingly, the amount of cash an investor will receive at maturity.

§ **The U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS are uncertain.** Please read the discussion under “Additional Information—Tax considerations” in this document and the discussion under “United States Federal Taxation” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS (together, the “Tax Disclosure Sections”) concerning the U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS. If the Internal Revenue Service (the “IRS”) were successful in asserting an alternative treatment, the timing and character of income on the Buffered PLUS might differ significantly from the tax treatment described in the Tax Disclosure Sections. For example, under one possible treatment, the IRS could seek to recharacterize the Buffered PLUS as debt instruments. In that event, U.S. Holders would be required to accrue into income original issue discount on the Buffered PLUS every year at a “comparable yield” determined at the time of issuance and recognize all income and gain in respect of the Buffered PLUS as ordinary income. Additionally, as discussed under “United States Federal Taxation—FATCA” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS, the withholding rules commonly referred to as “FATCA” would apply to the Buffered PLUS if they were recharacterized as debt instruments. The risk that financial instruments providing for buffers, triggers or similar downside protection features, such as the Buffered PLUS, would be recharacterized as debt is greater than the risk of recharacterization for comparable financial instruments that do not have such features. We do not plan to request a ruling from the IRS regarding the tax treatment of the Buffered

PLUS, and the IRS or a court may not agree with the tax treatment described in the Tax Disclosure Sections.

In 2007, the U.S. Treasury Department and the IRS released a notice requesting comments on the U.S. federal income tax treatment of “prepaid forward contracts” and similar instruments. The notice focuses in particular on whether to require holders of these instruments to accrue income over the term of their investment. It also asks for comments on a number of related topics, including the character of income or loss with respect to these instruments; whether short-term instruments should be subject to any such accrual regime; the relevance of factors such as the exchange-traded status of the instruments and the nature of the underlying property to which the instruments are linked; the degree, if any, to which income (including any mandated accruals) realized by non-U.S. investors should be subject to withholding tax; and whether these instruments are or should be subject to the “constructive ownership” rule, which very generally can operate to recharacterize certain long-term capital gain as ordinary income and impose an interest charge. While the notice requests comments on appropriate transition rules and effective dates, any Treasury regulations or other guidance promulgated after consideration of these issues could materially and adversely affect the tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS, possibly with retroactive effect. Both U.S. and Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisers regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS, including possible alternative treatments, the issues presented by this notice and any tax consequences arising under the laws of any state, local or non-U.S. taxing jurisdiction.

December 2018 Page 9

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

S&P 500® Index Overview

The S&P 500® Index, which is calculated, maintained and published by S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC (“S&P”), consists of stocks of 500 component companies selected to provide a performance benchmark for the U.S. equity markets. The calculation of the S&P 500® Index is based on the relative value of the float adjusted aggregate market capitalization of the 500 component companies as of a particular time as compared to the aggregate average market capitalization of 500 similar companies during the base period of the years 1941 through 1943. For additional information about the S&P 500® Index, see the information set forth under “S&P 500® Index” in the accompanying index supplement.

Information as of market close on December 21, 2018:

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Bloomberg Ticker Symbol: | SPX |
| Current Index Value: | 2,416.62 |
| 52 Weeks Ago: | 2,684.57 |
| 52 Week High (on 9/20/2018): | 2,930.75 |
| 52 Week Low (on 12/21/2018): | 2,416.62 |

The following graph sets forth the daily index closing values of the underlying index for each quarter in the period from January 1, 2013 through December 21, 2018. The related table sets forth the published high and low closing values, as well as end-of-quarter closing values, of the underlying index for each quarter in the same period. The index closing value of the underlying index on December 21, 2018 was 2,416.62. We obtained the information in the table and graph below from Bloomberg Financial Markets, without independent verification. The underlying index has at times experienced periods of high volatility. You should not take the historical values of the underlying index as an indication of its future performance, and no assurance can be given as to the index closing value of the underlying index on the valuation date.

S&P 500® Index Daily Index Closing Values

January 1, 2013 to December 21, 2018

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

| S&P 500® Index | High | Low | Period End |
|--|----------|----------|------------|
| 2013 | | | |
| First Quarter | 1,569.19 | 1,457.15 | 1,569.19 |
| Second Quarter | 1,669.16 | 1,541.61 | 1,606.28 |
| Third Quarter | 1,725.52 | 1,614.08 | 1,681.55 |
| Fourth Quarter | 1,848.36 | 1,655.45 | 1,848.36 |
| 2014 | | | |
| First Quarter | 1,878.04 | 1,741.89 | 1,872.34 |
| Second Quarter | 1,962.87 | 1,815.69 | 1,960.23 |
| Third Quarter | 2,011.36 | 1,909.57 | 1,972.29 |
| Fourth Quarter | 2,090.57 | 1,862.49 | 2,058.90 |
| 2015 | | | |
| First Quarter | 2,117.39 | 1,992.67 | 2,067.89 |
| Second Quarter | 2,130.82 | 2,057.64 | 2,063.11 |
| Third Quarter | 2,128.28 | 1,867.61 | 1,920.03 |
| Fourth Quarter | 2,109.79 | 1,923.82 | 2,043.94 |
| 2016 | | | |
| First Quarter | 2,063.95 | 1,829.08 | 2,059.74 |
| Second Quarter | 2,119.12 | 2,000.54 | 2,098.86 |
| Third Quarter | 2,190.15 | 2,088.55 | 2,168.27 |
| Fourth Quarter | 2,271.72 | 2,085.18 | 2,238.83 |
| 2017 | | | |
| First Quarter | 2,395.96 | 2,257.83 | 2,362.72 |
| Second Quarter | 2,453.46 | 2,328.95 | 2,423.41 |
| Third Quarter | 2,519.36 | 2,409.75 | 2,519.36 |
| Fourth Quarter | 2,690.16 | 2,529.12 | 2,673.61 |
| 2018 | | | |
| First Quarter | 2,872.87 | 2,581.00 | 2,640.87 |
| Second Quarter | 2,786.85 | 2,581.88 | 2,718.37 |
| Third Quarter | 2,930.75 | 2,713.22 | 2,913.98 |
| Fourth Quarter (through December 21, 2018) | 2,925.51 | 2,416.62 | 2,416.62 |

“Standard & Poor[®],” “S&P,” “S&P 500” “Standard & Poor’s 500” and “500” are trademarks of Standard and Poor’s Financial Services LLC. See “S&P 500 Index” in the accompanying index supplement.

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

Additional Terms of the Buffered PLUS

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

Additional

Terms:

If the terms described herein are inconsistent with those described in the accompanying product supplement, index supplement or prospectus, the terms described herein shall control.

Underlying index publisher: S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, or any successor thereof

Interest: None

Bull market or bear market PLUS: Bull market PLUS

Postponement of maturity date: If the scheduled valuation date is not an index business day or if a market disruption event occurs on that day so that the valuation date as postponed falls less than two business days prior to the scheduled maturity date, the maturity date of the Buffered PLUS will be postponed to the second business day following that valuation date as postponed.

Denominations: \$1,000 per Buffered PLUS and integral multiples thereof

Trustee: The Bank of New York Mellon

Calculation agent: MS & Co.

Issuer notice to registered security holders, the trustee and the depository: In the event that the maturity date is postponed due to postponement of the valuation date, the issuer shall give notice of such postponement and, once it has been determined, of the date to which the maturity date has been rescheduled (i) to each registered holder of the Buffered PLUS by mailing notice of such postponement by first class mail, postage prepaid, to such registered holder's last address as it shall appear upon the registry books, (ii) to the trustee by facsimile confirmed by mailing such notice to the trustee by first class mail, postage prepaid, at its New York office and (iii) to The Depository Trust Company (the "depository") by telephone or facsimile, confirmed by mailing such notice to the depository by first class mail, postage prepaid. Any notice that is mailed to a registered holder of the Buffered PLUS in the manner herein provided shall be conclusively presumed to have been duly given to such registered holder, whether or not such registered holder receives the notice. The issuer shall give such notice as promptly as possible, and in no case later than (i) with respect to notice of postponement of the maturity date, the business day immediately preceding the scheduled maturity date and (ii) with respect to notice of the date to which the maturity date has been rescheduled, the business day immediately following the actual valuation date for determining the final index value.

The issuer shall, or shall cause the calculation agent to, (i) provide written notice to the trustee and to the depository of the amount of cash to be delivered with respect to each stated principal amount of the Buffered PLUS, on or prior to 10:30 a.m. (New York City time) on the business day preceding the maturity date, and (ii) deliver the aggregate cash amount due with respect to the Buffered PLUS to the trustee for delivery to the depository, as holder of the Buffered PLUS, on the maturity date.

December 2018 Page 12

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

Additional Information About the Buffered PLUS

**Additional
Information:**

**Minimum
ticketing size:** \$1,000 / 1 Buffered PLUS

**Tax
considerations:** Although there is uncertainty regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS due to the lack of governing authority, in the opinion of our counsel, Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, under current law, and based on current market conditions, a Buffered PLUS should be treated as a single financial contract that is an “open transaction” for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Assuming this treatment of the Buffered PLUS is respected and subject to the discussion in “United States Federal Taxation” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS, the following U.S. federal income tax consequences should result based on current law:

§ A U.S. Holder should not be required to recognize taxable income over the term of the Buffered PLUS prior to settlement, other than pursuant to a sale or exchange.

§ Upon sale, exchange or settlement of the Buffered PLUS, a U.S. Holder should recognize gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount realized and the U.S. Holder’s tax basis in the Buffered PLUS. Such gain or loss should be long-term capital gain or loss if the investor has held the Buffered PLUS for more than one year, and short-term capital gain or loss otherwise.

In 2007, the U.S. Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service (the “IRS”) released a notice requesting comments on the U.S. federal income tax treatment of “prepaid forward contracts” and similar instruments. The notice focuses in particular on whether to require holders of these instruments to accrue income over the term of their investment. It also asks for comments on a number of related topics, including the character of income or loss with respect to these instruments; whether short-term instruments should be subject to any such accrual regime; the relevance of factors such as the exchange-traded status of the instruments and the nature of the underlying

property to which the instruments are linked; the degree, if any, to which income (including any mandated accruals) realized by non-U.S. investors should be subject to withholding tax; and whether these instruments are or should be subject to the “constructive ownership” rule, which very generally can operate to recharacterize certain long-term capital gain as ordinary income and impose an interest charge. While the notice requests comments on appropriate transition rules and effective dates, any Treasury regulations or other guidance promulgated after consideration of these issues could materially and adversely affect the tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS, possibly with retroactive effect.

As discussed in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS, Section 871(m) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder (“Section 871(m)”) generally impose a 30% (or a lower applicable treaty rate) withholding tax on dividend equivalents paid or deemed paid to Non-U.S. Holders with respect to certain financial instruments linked to U.S. equities or indices that include U.S. equities (each, an “Underlying Security”). Subject to certain exceptions, Section 871(m) generally applies to securities that substantially replicate the economic performance of one or more Underlying Securities, as determined based on tests set forth in the applicable Treasury regulations (a “Specified Security”). However, pursuant to an IRS notice, Section 871(m) will not apply to securities issued before January 1, 2021 that do not have a delta of one with respect to any Underlying Security. Based on our determination that the Buffered PLUS do not have a delta of one with respect to any Underlying Security, our counsel is of the opinion that the Buffered PLUS should not be Specified Securities and, therefore, should not be subject to Section 871(m).

Our determination is not binding on the IRS, and the IRS may disagree with this determination. Section 871(m) is complex and its application may depend on your particular circumstances, including whether you enter into other transactions with respect to an Underlying Security. If withholding is required, we will not be required to pay any additional amounts with respect to the amounts so withheld. You should consult your tax adviser regarding the potential application of Section 871(m) to the Buffered PLUS.

Both U.S. and non-U.S. investors considering an investment in the Buffered PLUS should read the discussion under “Risk Factors” in this document and the discussion under “United States Federal Taxation” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS and consult their tax advisers regarding all aspects of the U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in the Buffered PLUS, including possible alternative treatments, the issues presented by the aforementioned notice and any tax consequences arising under the laws of any state, local or non-U.S. taxing jurisdiction.

The discussion in the preceding paragraphs under “Tax considerations” and the discussion contained in the section entitled “United States Federal Taxation” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS, insofar as they purport to describe provisions of U.S. federal income tax laws or legal conclusions with respect thereto, constitute the full opinion of Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP regarding the material U.S. federal tax consequences of an investment in the

Buffered PLUS.

The proceeds from the sale of the Buffered PLUS will be used by us for general corporate purposes. We will receive, in aggregate, \$1,000 per Buffered PLUS issued, because, when we enter into hedging transactions in order to meet our obligations under the Buffered PLUS, our hedging counterparty will reimburse the cost of the agent's commissions. The costs of the Buffered PLUS borne by you and described beginning on page 2 above comprise the agent's commissions and the cost of issuing, structuring and hedging the Buffered PLUS.

**Use of proceeds
and hedging:**

December 2018 Page 13

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

On or prior to the pricing date, we hedged our anticipated exposure in connection with the Buffered PLUS by entering into hedging transactions with our affiliates and/or third party dealers. We expect our hedging counterparties to have taken positions in stocks of the underlying index and in futures and options contracts on the underlying index and any component stocks of the underlying index listed on major securities markets. Such purchase activity could have increased the value of the underlying index on the pricing date, and, therefore, could have increased the value at or above which the underlying index must close on the valuation date so that investors do not suffer a loss on their initial investment in the Buffered PLUS. In addition, through our affiliates, we are likely to modify our hedge position throughout the term of the Buffered PLUS, including on the valuation date, by purchasing and selling the stocks constituting the underlying index, futures or options contracts on the underlying index or its component stocks listed on major securities markets or positions in any other available securities or instruments that we may wish to use in connection with such hedging activities. As a result, these entities may be unwinding or adjusting hedge positions during the term of the Buffered PLUS, and the hedging strategy may involve greater and more frequent dynamic adjustments to the hedge as the valuation date approaches. We cannot give any assurance that our hedging activities will not affect the value of the underlying index, and, therefore, adversely affect the value of the Buffered PLUS or the payment you will receive at maturity. For further information on our use of proceeds and hedging, see “Use of Proceeds and Hedging” in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS.

**Benefit plan
investor
considerations:**

Each fiduciary of a pension, profit-sharing or other employee benefit plan subject to Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (“ERISA”) (a “Plan”), should consider the fiduciary standards of ERISA in the context of the Plan’s particular circumstances before authorizing an investment in the Buffered PLUS. Accordingly, among other factors, the fiduciary should consider whether the investment would satisfy the prudence and diversification requirements of ERISA and would be consistent with the documents and instruments governing the Plan.

In addition, we and certain of our affiliates, including MS & Co., may each be considered a “party in interest” within the meaning of ERISA, or a “disqualified person” within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), with respect to many Plans, as well as many individual retirement accounts and Keogh plans (such accounts and plans, together with other plans, accounts and arrangements subject to Section 4975 of the Code, also “Plans”). ERISA Section 406 and Code Section 4975 generally prohibit transactions between Plans and parties in interest or disqualified persons. Prohibited transactions within the meaning of ERISA or the Code would likely arise, for example, if the Buffered PLUS are acquired by or with the assets of a Plan with respect to which MS & Co. or any of its affiliates is a service provider or other party in interest, unless the Buffered PLUS are acquired pursuant to an exemption from the “prohibited transaction” rules. A violation of these “prohibited transaction” rules could result in an excise tax or other liabilities under ERISA and/or Section 4975 of the Code for those persons, unless exemptive relief is available under an applicable statutory or administrative exemption.

The U.S. Department of Labor has issued five prohibited transaction class exemptions (“PTCEs”) that may provide exemptive relief for direct or indirect prohibited transactions resulting from the purchase or holding of the Buffered PLUS. Those class exemptions are PTCE 96-23 (for certain transactions determined by in-house asset managers), PTCE 95-60 (for certain transactions involving insurance company general accounts), PTCE 91-38 (for certain transactions involving bank collective investment funds), PTCE 90-1 (for certain transactions involving insurance company separate accounts) and PTCE 84-14 (for certain transactions determined by independent qualified professional asset managers). In addition, ERISA Section 408(b)(17) and Section 4975(d)(20) of the Code provide an exemption for the purchase and sale of securities and the related lending transactions, provided that neither the issuer of the securities nor any of its affiliates has or exercises any discretionary authority or control or renders any investment advice with respect to the assets of the Plan involved in the transaction and provided further that the Plan pays no more, and receives no less, than “adequate consideration” in connection with the transaction (the so-called “service provider” exemption). There can be no assurance that any of these class or statutory exemptions will be available with respect to transactions involving the Buffered PLUS.

Because we may be considered a party in interest with respect to many Plans, the Buffered PLUS may not be purchased, held or disposed of by any Plan, any entity whose underlying assets include “plan assets” by reason of any Plan’s investment in the entity (a “Plan Asset Entity”) or any person investing “plan assets” of any Plan, unless such purchase, holding or disposition is eligible for exemptive relief, including relief available under PTCEs 96-23, 95-60, 91-38, 90-1, 84-14 or the service provider exemption or such purchase, holding or disposition is otherwise not prohibited. Any purchaser, including any fiduciary purchasing on behalf of a Plan, transferee or holder of the Buffered PLUS will be deemed to have represented, in its corporate and its fiduciary capacity, by its purchase and holding of the Buffered PLUS that either (a) it is not a Plan or a Plan Asset Entity and is not purchasing such Buffered PLUS on behalf of or with “plan assets” of any Plan or with any assets of a governmental, non-U.S. or church plan that is subject to any federal, state, local or non-U.S. law that is substantially similar to the provisions of Section 406 of ERISA or Section 4975 of the Code (“Similar Law”) or (b) its purchase, holding and disposition of these Buffered PLUS will not constitute or result in a non-exempt prohibited transaction under Section 406 of ERISA or Section 4975 of the Code or violate any Similar Law.

Due to the complexity of these rules and the penalties that may be imposed upon persons involved in non-

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

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exempt prohibited transactions, it is particularly important that fiduciaries or other persons considering purchasing the Buffered PLUS on behalf of or with “plan assets” of any Plan consult with their counsel regarding the availability of exemptive relief.

The Buffered PLUS are contractual financial instruments. The financial exposure provided by the Buffered PLUS is not a substitute or proxy for, and is not intended as a substitute or proxy for, individualized investment management or advice for the benefit of any purchaser or holder of the Buffered PLUS. The Buffered PLUS have not been designed and will not be administered in a manner intended to reflect the individualized needs and objectives of any purchaser or holder of the Buffered PLUS.

Each purchaser or holder of any Buffered PLUS acknowledges and agrees that:

(i) the purchaser or holder or its fiduciary has made and shall make all investment decisions for the purchaser or holder and the purchaser or holder has not relied and shall not rely in any way upon us or our affiliates to act as a fiduciary or adviser of the purchaser or holder with respect to (A) the design and terms of the Buffered PLUS, (B) the purchaser or holder’s investment in the Buffered PLUS, or (C) the exercise of or failure to exercise any rights we have under or with respect to the Buffered PLUS;

(ii) we and our affiliates have acted and will act solely for our own account in connection with (A) all transactions relating to the Buffered PLUS and (B) all hedging transactions in connection with our obligations under the Buffered PLUS;

(iii) any and all assets and positions relating to hedging transactions by us or our affiliates are assets and positions of those entities and are not assets and positions held for the benefit of the purchaser or holder;

(iv) our interests are adverse to the interests of the purchaser or holder; and

(v) neither we nor any of our affiliates is a fiduciary or adviser of the purchaser or holder in connection with any such assets, positions or transactions, and any information that we or any of our affiliates may provide is not intended to be impartial investment advice.

Each purchaser and holder of the Buffered PLUS has exclusive responsibility for ensuring that its purchase, holding and disposition of the Buffered PLUS do not violate the prohibited transaction rules of ERISA or the Code or any Similar Law. The sale of any Buffered PLUS to any Plan or plan subject to Similar Law is in no respect a representation by us or any of our affiliates or representatives that such an investment meets all relevant legal requirements with respect to investments by plans generally or any particular plan, or that such an investment is appropriate for plans generally or any particular plan. In this regard, neither this discussion nor anything provided in this document is or is intended to be investment advice directed at any potential Plan purchaser or at Plan purchasers generally and such purchasers of the Buffered PLUS should consult and rely on their own counsel and advisers as to whether an investment in the Buffered PLUS is suitable.

However, individual retirement accounts, individual retirement annuities and Keogh plans, as well as employee benefit plans that permit participants to direct the investment of their accounts, will not be permitted to purchase or hold the Buffered PLUS if the account, plan or annuity is for the benefit of an employee of Morgan Stanley or Morgan Stanley Wealth Management or a family member and the employee receives any compensation (such as, for example, an addition to bonus) based on the purchase of the Buffered PLUS by the account, plan or annuity.

Additional considerations:

Client accounts over which Morgan Stanley, Morgan Stanley Wealth Management or any of their respective subsidiaries have investment discretion are not permitted to purchase the Buffered PLUS, either directly or indirectly.

Selected dealers and their financial advisors will receive a structuring fee of \$4.00 for each Buffered PLUS. MS & Co. will not receive a sales commission in connection with the Buffered PLUS.

Supplemental information regarding plan of distribution; conflicts of interest:

MS & Co. is an affiliate of MSFL and a wholly owned subsidiary of Morgan Stanley, and it and other affiliates of ours expect to make a profit by selling, structuring and, when applicable, hedging the Buffered PLUS.

MS & Co. will conduct this offering in compliance with the requirements of FINRA Rule 5121 of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc., which is commonly referred to as FINRA, regarding a FINRA member firm's distribution of the securities of an affiliate and related conflicts of interest. MS & Co. or any of our other affiliates may not make sales in this offering to any discretionary account. See "Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of Interest)" and "Use of Proceeds and Hedging" in the accompanying product supplement for PLUS.

**Validity of the
Buffered PLUS:**

In the opinion of Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, as special counsel to MSFL and Morgan Stanley, when the Buffered PLUS offered by this pricing supplement have been executed and issued by MSFL, authenticated by the trustee pursuant to the MSFL Senior Debt Indenture (as defined in the accompanying prospectus) and delivered against payment as contemplated herein, such Buffered PLUS will be valid and binding obligations of MSFL and the related guarantee will be a valid and binding obligation of Morgan Stanley, enforceable in accordance with their terms, subject to applicable bankruptcy, insolvency and similar laws affecting creditors' rights generally, concepts of reasonableness and equitable principles of general applicability (including, without

Morgan Stanley Finance LLC

Buffered PLUS Based on the Value of the S&P 500® Index due December 29, 2022

Buffered Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM

Principal at Risk Securities

limitation, concepts of good faith, fair dealing and the lack of bad faith), *provided* that such counsel expresses no opinion as to (i) the effect of fraudulent conveyance, fraudulent transfer or similar provision of applicable law on the conclusions expressed above and (ii) any provision of the MSFL Senior Debt Indenture that purports to avoid the effect of fraudulent conveyance, fraudulent transfer or similar provision of applicable law by limiting the amount of Morgan Stanley's obligation under the related guarantee. This opinion is given as of the date hereof and is limited to the laws of the State of New York, the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware and the Delaware Limited Liability Company Act. In addition, this opinion is subject to customary assumptions about the trustee's authorization, execution and delivery of the MSFL Senior Debt Indenture and its authentication of the Buffered PLUS and the validity, binding nature and enforceability of the MSFL Senior Debt Indenture with respect to the trustee, all as stated in the letter of such counsel dated November 16, 2017, which is Exhibit 5-a to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 filed by Morgan Stanley on November 16, 2017.

Contact:

Morgan Stanley Wealth Management clients may contact their local Morgan Stanley branch office or our principal executive offices at 1585 Broadway, New York, New York 10036 (telephone number (866) 477-4776). All other clients may contact their local brokerage representative. Third-party distributors may contact Morgan Stanley Structured Investment Sales at (800) 233-1087.

Where you can find more information:

Morgan Stanley and MSFL have filed a registration statement (including a prospectus, as supplemented by the product supplement for PLUS and the index supplement) with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, for the offering to which this communication relates. You should read the prospectus in that registration statement, the product supplement for PLUS, the index supplement and any other documents relating to this offering that Morgan Stanley and MSFL have filed with the SEC for more complete information about Morgan Stanley, MSFL and this offering. You may get these documents without cost by visiting EDGAR on the SEC web site at www.sec.gov. Alternatively, Morgan Stanley, MSFL, any underwriter or any dealer participating in the offering will arrange to send you the product supplement for PLUS, index supplement and prospectus if you so request by calling toll-free 1-(800)-584-6837.

You may access these documents on the SEC web site at www.sec.gov as follows:

[Product Supplement for PLUS dated November 16, 2017](#)

[Index Supplement dated November 16, 2017](#)

Prospectus dated November 16, 2017

Terms used but not defined in this document are defined in the product supplement for PLUS, in the index supplement or in the prospectus.

“Performance Leveraged Upside SecuritiesSM” and “PLUSSM” are our service marks.

December 2018 Page 16