

Listing: TSX (Toronto Stock Exchange)

Symbol: XEC, XEC.U, XSEM

**Press Release
For Immediate Release**

BlackRock® Canada Announces Certain Changes to XEC and XSEM

Toronto, March 13, 2023 – BlackRock Asset Management Canada Limited (“**BlackRock Canada**”), an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of BlackRock, Inc. (“**BlackRock**”) (NYSE: BLK), has determined to change the manner in which the investment strategies of iShares Core MSCI Emerging Markets IMI Index ETF (“**XEC**”) and iShares ESG Aware MSCI Emerging Markets Index ETF (“**XSEM**”, and together with XEC, the “**iShares ETFs**”) are implemented. The changes are expected to reduce the negative effect of foreign withholding taxes on XEC and XSEM’s performance.

To pursue its investment objective, XEC is commencing investing primarily in equity securities of companies from emerging markets that are included in the MSCI Emerging Markets Investable Market Index (the “**XEC Index**”), such that the resulting portfolio will have characteristics that closely match the characteristics of the XEC Index. This direct investment strategy will be a change from how XEC currently implements its investment strategy by investing in shares of the iShares Core MSCI Emerging Markets ETF (IEMG), a U.S. iShares Fund.

To pursue its investment objective, XSEM is commencing investing primarily in equity securities of companies from emerging markets that are included in the MSCI Emerging Markets Extended ESG Focus Index (the “**XSEM Index**”), such that the resulting portfolio will have characteristics that closely match the characteristics of the XSEM Index. This direct investment strategy will be a change from how XSEM currently implements its investment strategy by investing in shares of the iShares ESG Aware MSCI EM ETF (ESGE), a U.S. iShares Fund.

These changes are being implemented in accordance with the iShares ETFs’ current prospectus disclosure. The investment objectives of the iShares ETFs, the XEC Index and the XSEM Index will remain unchanged. As a result of these changes in investment strategy implementation, each iShares ETF will significantly reduce its exposure to U.S. withholding taxes. While foreign withholding taxes will continue to apply to dividends paid on certain emerging market equity securities included in the XEC Index and XSEM Index, it is expected that the changes in investment strategy implementation will reduce the overall amount of withholding taxes borne directly or indirectly by each iShares ETF.

BlackRock Canada’s current expectation is that each iShares ETF will realize net capital losses as a result of the changes to such iShares ETF’s portfolio.

The adjustment to change to the way XEC and XSEM strategies are implemented is in line with BlackRock’s ongoing commitment to provide a comprehensive range of ETF solutions spanning asset classes, geographies, and investment styles to address a variety of investor needs.

For more information about the iShares ETFs, please visit www.blackrock.com/ca.

About BlackRock

BlackRock’s purpose is to help more and more people experience financial well-being. As a fiduciary to investors and a leading provider of financial technology, we help millions of people build

savings that serve them throughout their lives by making investing easier and more affordable. For additional information on BlackRock, please visit www.blackrock.com/corporate.

About iShares

iShares unlocks opportunity across markets to meet the evolving needs of investors. With more than twenty years of experience, a global line-up of 1300+ exchange traded funds (ETFs) and US\$2.91 trillion in assets under management as of December 31, 2022, iShares continues to drive progress for the financial industry. iShares funds are powered by the expert portfolio and risk management of BlackRock.

iShares® ETFs are managed by BlackRock Asset Management Canada Limited.

Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses all may be associated with investing in iShares ETFs. Please read the relevant prospectus before investing. The funds are not guaranteed, their values change frequently and past performance may not be repeated. Tax, investment and all other decisions should be made, as appropriate, only with guidance from a qualified professional.

Contact for Media:

Reem Jazar

Email: reem.jazar@blackrock.com