

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MetLife Foundation and Asia Society Hong Kong Center
Join Forces to Promote Economic Inclusion**

(Hong Kong, April 15, 2016) Asia Society Hong Kong Center (ASHK) and MetLife Foundation announced today the launch of the **MetLife Foundation - Asia Society Economic Inclusion Series** (the Series), which seeks to address issues related to income inequality. Kicking off the Series is a talk on “Building an Inclusive Society Together,” to be held at ASHK on April 19, 2016.

The Series provides a high-level, non-partisan platform, where a select group of experts will engage in thought-provoking dialogue on attaining a more equitable economic growth and creating a better world for all by reducing income inequality and boosting quality job creation.

“ASHK has a solid track record in facilitating the exchange of ideas on a wide range of subjects that have global and regional impacts. For example, we have held talks on workforce readiness and poverty alleviation in China that attracted widespread attention. Like the previous talks, the Asia Society Economic Inclusion Series will bring the best minds together to address the issue of financial well-being of moderate and low-income earners,” said **S. Alice Mong, Executive Director of Asia Society Hong Kong Center**. “Also, the Series will solidify ASHK’s reputation as a leading institution that promotes regional dialogue and collaboration.”

“More than two billion people worldwide don’t have access to the traditional financial tools they need to build and maintain the lifestyles they want,” remarked **Dennis White, President and Chief Executive Officer of MetLife Foundation**. “Promoting financial inclusion is the primary mission of MetLife Foundation. The MetLife Foundation - Asia Society Economic Inclusion series allows us to explore related topics in depth, and examine the many ways we can help to build a better future in our local communities.”

Three distinguished panelists – former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, **Wim Kok**; Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Social Ventures Hong Kong **Francis Ngai**; and Chairman of Hainan Rural Credit Union, **Wu Weixiong** – will discuss the role of social impact investment in today’s world and how to build an Inclusive society at the inaugural talk. The discussion will be moderated by **Henny Sender**, Chief Correspondent for International Finance at the *Financial Times*.

Speakers at “Building an Inclusive Society Together”



Wim Kok was Prime Minister of the Netherlands between 1994 and 2002. He has also served as Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, and was leader of the Dutch Labor Party for 16 years. After his political career, Mr. Kok served as non-executive director of Royal Dutch Shell, ING Group and KLM, and was recently appointed to the Board of China Construction Bank. He is a director of the Advisory Board of the High Impact Capital Advisors (HK) Limited. From 2010 and 2014, Mr. Kok was President of the Club of Madrid, the world’s largest organization of former heads of state and government.



Francis Ngai is Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Social Ventures Hong Kong (SVhk), a venture philanthropic organization focused on inventing, incubating, and investing in social start-ups. Since its establishment in 2007, SVhk has incubated and invested in over 20 portfolio ventures. Prior to SVhk, Mr. Ngai was Head of Strategy at a listed technology conglomerate. He was selected as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Persons in Hong Kong in 2011 and a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum in 2012.



Wu Weixiong is Chairman of Hainan Rural Credit Union (HRCU), one of the largest and most successful rural credit unions in China. Under his leadership, HRCU has delivered a sustained and profitable growth since 2007 with a total deposit assets of 117 billion renminbi, 442 branches, and 5,000 employees, all focused on serving rural communities throughout Hainan Province. Mr. Wu previously served as Secretary of the Party Committee of Haikou Luo Niu Shan Comprehensive Agricultural Development Zone and Deputy Mayor of Haikou. He is the recipient of numerous awards during his 30-year career.



Moderator: Henny Sender is Chief Correspondent for International Finance at the *Financial Times*, based in New York and Hong Kong. Prior to joining the FT in 2007, Ms. Sender served as the *Wall Street Journal’s* Senior Special Writer for the Money & Investing section, covering private equity and hedge funds. Ms. Sender was part of a team at the WSJ that won a Loeb award for the coverage of the meltdown of Amaranth, a hedge fund. Ms. Sender has also written for the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and *Institutional Investor*. She has a PhD in India history and holds an MS from the Columbia University School of Journalism.

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About Asia Society

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller III in New York, Asia Society is a leading not-for-profit, non-government educational organization dedicated to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States in a global context. Across the fields of arts, business, culture, education, and policy, Asia Society provides insight, generates ideas, and promotes collaboration to address present challenges and create a shared future.

About Asia Society Hong Kong Center

Established in 1990, Asia Society Hong Kong Center (ASHK) is one of the 12 centers of Asia Society. In February 2012, it established its new permanent home in Admiralty at the former explosives magazine site of the old Victoria Barracks. Through careful conservation, restoration, and adaptive re-use, this heritage site has successfully been transformed into a cultural, artistic, and intellectual hub. Members of the public are encouraged to visit ASHK, to take part in the programs and view the exhibitions organized by ASHK and its partners.

As the leading regional knowledge-based platform for furthering the understanding of the countries and cultures of Asia and global issues that impact the region, ASHK boasts extensive regional and international networks of leaders and scholars, and offers a broad variety of programs in the form of lectures, performances, film screenings, and exhibitions to the community.

About MetLife Foundation

MetLife Foundation was created in 1976 to continue MetLife's long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Since its founding, through the end of 2014, MetLife Foundation has provided more than \$700 million in grants and \$70 million in program-related investments to organizations addressing issues that have a positive impact in their communities. Today, the Foundation is dedicated to advancing financial inclusion, committing \$200 million to help build a secure future for individuals and communities around the world. For more information, please visit www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation/index.html.