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The Street: With Short-Term Interest Rates Expected to Rise, Is Gold A Buy?

November 3, 2014

Interviewer: Gold prices are down about 11% over the past year, currently trading at \$11.68 per ounce, but with the Federal Reserve s quantitative easing program gone, and the expectation that short-term interest rates will rise in 2015, what should your strategy be going forward when it comes to gold? Let s bring in Will Rhind, Managing Director of Institutional Investment at the World Gold Council.

Now Will, we typically view gold as a hedge against market risk, but with quantitative easing gone and the expectation that the Fed will raise the Fed funds rate at some point next year, I mean rates have been near zero since December 2008, is this really the time to be getting into gold?

Will: Well I think the price at the moment reflects precisely the environment that you re talking about, which is a stronger dollar primarily and a stronger U.S. economy. But gold is a global market and the majority of demand for gold comes actually from China, from India, from other emerging economies where it s both a mechanism for savings but also a consumer asset.

Interviewer: Now talk to us about GDP. We ve had a pretty strong reading last week. Third quarter GDP at an annualized 3.5%, but the jury s still out over whether we ll see the yearly growth rate above 2%. So going into fourth quarter, how should investors play gold?

Will: Well I think that from an investment perspective, you know, gold should be viewed as an allocation and a diversified portfolio, and the World Gold Council research suggests an allocation of somewhere between 2 and 10% in a diversified portfolio. Gold is not the primary asset that people are going to hold. People are still going to primarily hold equities and bonds, but as a mechanism for diversification as you talked about, gold is certainly something that we believe should belong in a diversified portfolio.

Interviewer: Talk to us about gold ETFs. Are these a smarter investment? Are they a more cost-effective option?

Will: Well gold ETFs are probably the most popular way for people to access and invest in the gold market. They ve certainly been a credible success over the past 10 years. The largest gold ETF in the world is the GLD and has approximately \$30 billion under management. And so they re very, very popular for people, relatively easy to access, just because you can buy and sell just like a stock or share, and cost-effective as well. So they re probably the most popular way that people use to access and invest in the gold market.

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Interviewer: Well thanks for joining us.

Will: Thank you.

Interviewer: For The Street, I m Scott Gamm in New York.

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