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# International Politics and the Spread of Quotas for Women in Legislatures

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**Abstract** Quotas to promote women's representation in the world's legislatures have spread to more than one hundred countries. The diffusion of gender quotas poses a puzzle since they have often been adopted in countries where women have low status. International influence and inducements best explain quota adoption in developing countries. Promoting gender equality, including through gender quotas, has become a key part of international democracy promotion. The international legitimacy of gender quotas leads them to be adopted through two causal pathways: directly, through postconflict peace operations, and indirectly, by encouraging countries, especially those that depend on foreign aid, to signal their commitment to democracy by adopting quotas. An event history analysis, which controls for other relevant factors, shows that the hypothesized relationships exist. Further support comes from a process-tracing analysis of Afghanistan's 2004 quota.

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Prior to the 1970s, only five countries in the world had adopted quotas to promote women's representation in politics. Today, more than one hundred countries have done so. With women's representation still lagging far behind men's—women made up only 18 percent of the members of the world's national legislatures in 2008—quotas have become a prominent way to promote women's representation in politics.<sup>1</sup> Yet the global spread of gender quotas poses a puzzle since they have often been adopted in developing countries where women seem to have an otherwise low status. As an *Economist* article wryly noted, the list of countries with gender quotas has been “joined in recent years by such feminist-friendly places as Afghan-

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1. Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments database. Available at (<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>). Accessed 22 September 2010.

istan, Iraq, and Sudan.”<sup>2</sup> Why are quotas to ensure women’s representation in politics so often adopted today in the developing world?

This article argues that international incentives have been key to the global diffusion of quotes. Since the Cold War’s end, international democracy assistance has exploded. Promoting gender equality is a key aspect of aiding democracy abroad and gender quotas have gradually come to be seen as an important and legitimate part of democratization. The international legitimacy of gender quotas causes developing democracies to adopt them through two mechanisms. First, there has been significant international involvement in postconflict countries since the Cold War via liberalizing peace operations. Through them, international actors promote gender equality and gender quotas when new constitutions are being written. Second, internationally legitimate ideas create resources that political leaders can use strategically. Leaders adopt gender quotas as a signal—sincere or insincere—to the international community or to domestic actors of their commitment to liberal democracy. Since quota laws demonstrate, at least on paper, countries’ intentions to include different groups in the political process, they are attractive to regimes that are less than fully representative in other ways. Their appeal comes from the diverse benefits that leaders perceive quotas to foster—from foreign aid to improved legitimacy.

To preview this article’s main conclusions, I find strong evidence that international incentives are positively and significantly related to a country’s likelihood of adopting a gender quota. I measure international incentives by the presence of a United Nations (UN) peace operation that supports political liberalization, whether a country receives foreign aid, and whether a country invited international election monitors to its last election. Such factors are significantly more likely to be related to the likelihood of quota adoption than are measures of gender-related development, democracy levels, transnational civil society presence, and the adoption of related laws. This conclusion is supported by a nested research design that combines cross-national statistical analysis to establish correlation and a case study of Afghanistan’s 2004 quota to trace the causal process at work.

The findings are significant for at least two literatures. First, they add to recent research on the international sources of domestic politics since the Cold War. A topic of particular interest has been how international actors help spread a variety of forms of domestic liberalization.<sup>3</sup> It has not been obvious, however, that gender quotas comprise part of the phenomenon. This article provides a causal argument about the international sources of gender quotas by focusing on the actors involved in democracy promotion and their ideas about legitimate institutions for developing democracies. It suggests that there may be an even wider range of domestic policies that international forces influence than scholars realized. Furthermore, by

2. *The Economist*, U.S. ed., 20 September 2008, 64.

3. See, for example, Beaulieu and Hyde 2009; Hyde 2007; Kelley 2008; Levitsky and Way 2005; Pevehouse 2002; and Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett 2006. The foundational article is Gourevitch 1978.

outlining the direct and indirect mechanisms through which international actors encourage the spread of gender quotas, it offers a general framework through which we might study policy diffusion. The article shares constructivist scholars' interest in the development of ideas about appropriate political conduct.<sup>4</sup> But its findings on the impact of those ideas—that international influence and inducements prompt countries to adopt quotas—have more in common with recent research on the coercive dimensions of international impact on domestic human rights practices.<sup>5</sup>

Second, the findings offer a new way of thinking about gender quotas, a subject of considerable interest in a rich literature in the subfield of women and politics. Much of the literature examines the domestic political incentives for quota adoption, especially in response to grassroots women's mobilization and party leaders' strategic calculations.<sup>6</sup> More recent research has emphasized international and transnational dynamics, such as norm diffusion, emulation, foreign imposition, and transnational support for domestic quota campaigns.<sup>7</sup> In the leading study of gender quotas' global diffusion, Krook emphasizes causal heterogeneity when evaluating those processes, finding that the same causal factors operate differently in different instances.<sup>8</sup> By looking at a theoretically relevant subgroup of countries—developing countries—we can improve the clarity of our theory by identifying the most relevant causal pattern within this more homogeneous set.<sup>9</sup> This article attempts to do so by developing a new theory of international incentives for adopting quotas. It also raises important questions about the impact of quotas. Previous research has indicated that quotas affect the quantity of women in politics as well as public attitudes and public policies.<sup>10</sup> But are the effects the same when quotas are adopted principally due to international politics?

## What Are Gender Quotas?

Gender quotas are one of the key institutional innovations in the politics of the late twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> They come in three forms. Reserved seats are set aside for women in parliaments. Legislative quotas require a certain percentage of political parties' nominees to be women. Voluntary party quotas involve individual parties promising to nominate a certain percentage of women. Collectively, the

4. See, for example, Keck and Sikkink 1998; and Finnemore 1996.

5. Hafner-Burton 2005.

6. See Beckwith 2003; and Caul 2001.

7. See Krook 2006; Ellerby 2009; and Dahlerup 2006.

8. Krook 2006, 207–8.

9. This article also focuses on a theoretically relevant subset of quotas, legal quotas, as I explain in the next section, whereas Krook 2009 focuses on the full spectrum of quotas.

10. See Tripp and Kang 2008; Bhavnani 2009; Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007; and Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004.

11. See Krook 2009, who also provides a more comprehensive discussion of the varieties of gender quotas.

first two categories are called *legal quotas* and usually require amendments to constitutions or electoral laws. Quotas can apply to the local or national level of a political system. Quotas can be large (South Korea's 50 percent legislative quota in 2004) or small (Nepal's 5 percent legislative quota in 1990), although the most common size is 30 percent. Finally, legislative quotas can be weakly enforced (France reduces noncompliant parties' public funding) or strongly enforced (Brazil requires noncompliant parties to leave seats open).

Figure 1 charts quotas' spread by decade.<sup>12</sup> A handful of countries adopted some type of quota prior to the 1970s. The earliest adopters included both consolidated democracies and other countries.<sup>13</sup> The first quotas were sometimes small, such as Pakistan's, which set aside 10 out of 310 seats in the National Assembly in its first Constitution in 1956, or vague, such as China's, which in 1955 stated that "an 'appropriate' and increasing proportion of women should be elected."<sup>14</sup> In the 1980s, left-leaning political parties in consolidated democracies such as Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, and Sweden began to voluntarily adopt gender quotas. Subsequently, dozens of countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, and Asia adopted legal and voluntary party quotas in the 1990s and 2000s.

Figure 2 charts types of quotas, by region. Developing countries, which are the significant majority of post-Cold War adopters, favor legal quotas much more than the consolidated, advanced industrial democracies of Western Europe. It is only in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)—the regions that perform lowest on most other indicators of women's status—that quotas have ever taken the form of reserved seats.<sup>15</sup>

This article develops a theory to explain national legal quota adoption in developing countries. Previous research on gender and politics illustrates the benefits of separately examining developed and developing countries; for example, the determinants of women's representation in high- and middle-income countries have little explanatory power in low-income countries.<sup>16</sup> Incumbents in advanced industrial democracies may benefit politically from adopting quotas, especially if local women's movements demand them.<sup>17</sup> Such political incentives are, however, less apparent in countries where women have lower status and public opinion opposes

12. This chart includes quotas of any type and draws on Krook 2006, 312–13.

13. Long-term consolidated democracies are classified by the World Bank as high income; they score below 3 on Freedom House's Scale, receive no aide from USAID between 1990 and 2003, and are not newly independent states. See Finkel, Pérez-Liñán, and Seligson 2007, 414.

14. Krook 2009, 237.

15. For example, the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) measures a country's achievement in terms of health, knowledge, and standard of living through the lens of gender equality. The average GDI scores for 2005 are Africa = 0.49, Asia = 0.72, and the Middle East and North Africa = 0.72, as compared to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries = 0.94. Available at ([http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR05\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR05_complete.pdf)). Accessed 2 August 2010.

16. Hughes 2009.

17. See Caul 2001; and Beckwith 2003.

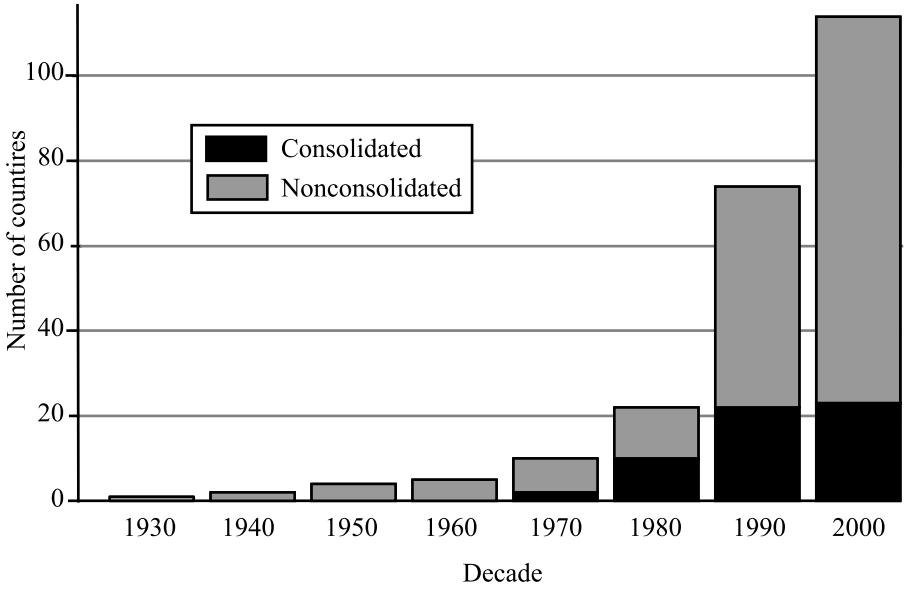


FIGURE 1. Countries that have adopted gender quotas, by decade

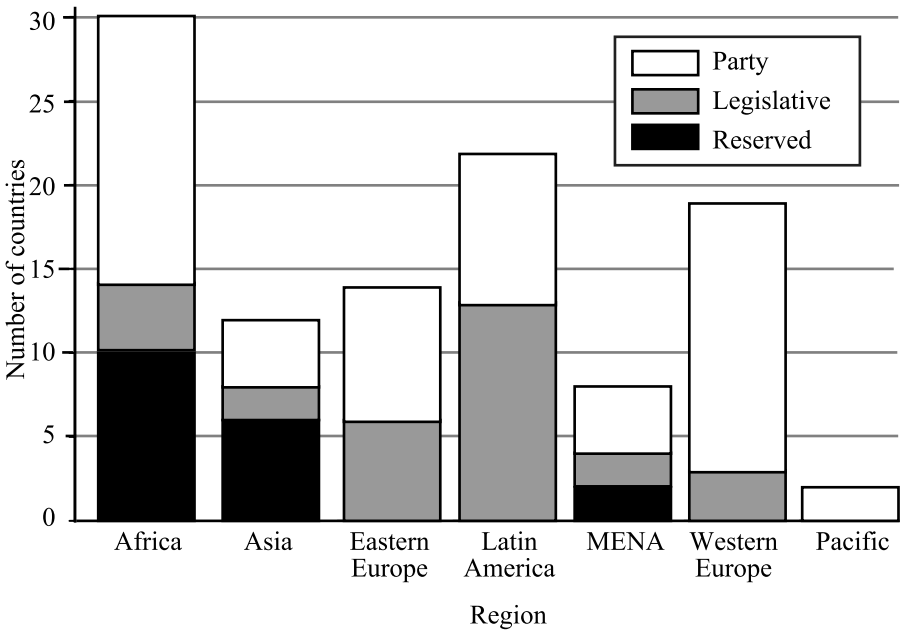


FIGURE 2. Types of gender quotas, by region

women leaders. The next section presents the international environment as a source of incentives to adopt legal quotas after reviewing the existing literature for plausible alternative explanations.

## Why Adopt Gender Quotas?

### *Structural and Sociological Insights into Quota Adoption*

Inglehart and Norris's revised modernization theory posits that the bundle of societal transformations that accompany economic development and democratization includes progress toward gender equality.<sup>18</sup> As countries industrialize, women enter the work force, fertility levels decrease, female literacy and education increase, and gender attitudes shift. Countries also democratize. As countries then move toward the postindustrial stage of development, new social policies promote gender equality at work and in the public sphere. Women's movements play a key role in demanding those policies. The process of economic, political, and social change depends, however, on cultural heritage. In particular, Muslim countries may have significantly more patriarchal social orders.<sup>19</sup>

Revised modernization theory suggests at least four hypotheses about a country's likelihood of adopting gender quotas, holding all else equal. First, more developed countries should be more likely to adopt gender quotas. Second, countries that are more democratic should be more likely to adopt quotas. Third, improvements in direct measures of women's socioeconomic status—such as women's education levels, life expectancy, or literacy levels relative to men's—should also increase countries' likelihoods of quota adoption. Fourth, Muslim countries should be less likely to adopt quotas than non-Muslim countries.

The world polity theory of Meyer and colleagues offers another plausible explanation of quota adoption. It states: "Many features of the contemporary nation-state derive from worldwide models constructed and propagated through global cultural and associational processes."<sup>20</sup> International organizations play a key role in spreading "policy scripts," or models for legitimate action. One relevant study in this tradition examined the cross-national spread of women's suffrage between 1890 and 1990. It found that women's suffrage was initially brought about by pioneering women's movements but later was the result of countries' desires to adhere to emergent international citizenship norms.<sup>21</sup> Eventually, almost all states adopted universal suffrage, which became taken for granted as a feature of modern statehood.

Gender quotas could be viewed as features of modern statehood since the 1980s. The world polity logic predicts that as a country's ties to the world polity increase,

18. Inglehart and Norris 2003.

19. See Fish 2002; and Inglehart and Norris 2003.

20. Meyer et al. 1997, 144–45. See also Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett 2006 on "emulation."

21. Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan 1997.

its likelihood of quota adoption should also increase, all else equal. Ties to the world polity are often measured by the presence of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), which diffuse and promote human rights principles globally.<sup>22</sup> Women's INGOs may be especially significant for quota adoption since they provide organizational and informational resources for domestic activists.<sup>23</sup> Another indicator of a country's world polity ties is the previous adoption of a related "policy script," such as extending suffrage to women or ratifying the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).<sup>24</sup> World polity theory also implies that as the percentage of quota adopters in a country's region or in the world increases, or both, the country should be more likely to emulate the world polity's model and to adopt quotas.

The patterns of quota adoption across world regions and over time present some *prima facie* evidence against modernization and world polity explanations of quota adoption, although I systematically test the theories' observable implications. Poorer, less democratic countries adopt reserved seats and legislative quotas more often than richer, long-term democracies. Contemporary states are not converging on a legitimate, universal world model. Instead, they are diverging: many developing countries have adopted legal quotas even as legal quotas remain beyond consideration in developed countries such as the United States.

### *The Democracy Establishment and Quotas' International Legitimacy*

I argue that the international legitimacy of gender quotas as part of democratization creates incentives for developing democracies to adopt them. Although this argument shares an affinity with world polity theory's emphasis on appropriate policies, as I shall show, it offers a unique account of how quotas became appropriate as well as different predictions about which countries will adopt quotas. This section establishes the international legitimacy of gender quotas by focusing on a network that I call the *democracy establishment*. Who are the main actors? What do they do? How and why do they legitimize gender quotas? While this article's main goal is not to explain the origins of the democracy establishment's ideas about gender equality, it is important to offer some basis for them. The next section offers the meat of the article's theory by predicting the impact of the democracy establishment's ideas.

Democracy assistance has rapidly expanded in the past twenty-five years.<sup>25</sup> What in the early 1980s consisted of a few political party foundations with limited bud-

22. Keck and Sikkink 1998.

23. True and Minstrom 2001.

24. See Wotipka and Ramirez 2008; Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan 1997; and Hughes 2009. These variables may also measure women's ability to advocate for quotas since CEDAW improves women's rights (see Simmons 2009) and the number of years since female suffrage affects the number of women in parliament (see Reynolds 1999).

25. See Carothers 1999; and Burnell 2000.

gets is now an international, professional field that spends billions of dollars a year to promote democracy in nearly one hundred countries. The explosion of democracy assistance is part of an overall growth in democracy promotion since the Cold War's end, when democracy became viewed as a "panacea" to achieve security and development objectives.<sup>26</sup> Democracy promotion can be accomplished through economic sanctions and rewards, diplomatic measures, and even military intervention. Democracy assistance is an additional tool. It is "aid specifically designed to foster a democratic opening in a nondemocratic country or to further a democratic transition in a country that has experienced a democratic opening."<sup>27</sup> The people and institutions that carry out democracy assistance form what I call the democracy establishment.

Intergovernmental, governmental, quasi-governmental, and nongovernmental actors make up the democracy establishment. In the United States, they include bureaus in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the State Department, nonprofit organizations such as Freedom House and the Carter Center, and for-profit contractors such as Chemonics. In Europe, the government-affiliated actors include Germany's political party foundations and Britain's Westminster Foundation for Democracy. The democracy establishment also includes offices in major inter-governmental organizations, such as the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, the Council of Europe, and International IDEA.

The democracy establishment resembles other networks in world politics.<sup>28</sup> First, many of its actors are governmental and, like a transgovernmental network, they promote professional norms and provide technical assistance. They do not, however, attempt to directly perform governance functions.<sup>29</sup> Second, similar to transnational advocacy networks, the democracy establishment has a principled agenda: promoting greater democracy and shared values.<sup>30</sup> However, it is closely tied to state governments and its actors do not usually rely on moral suasion. Finally, like an epistemic community, the democracy establishment is a professional network that provides advice and elucidates cause-effect relationships.<sup>31</sup> The case of an epistemic community (Keynesian economists) whose ideas served as a policy road map after a major historical break (World War II) especially parallels the democracy establishment's post-Cold War influence.<sup>32</sup> The democracy establishment derives its legitimacy through the normative link between democracy and good governance, however, whereas epistemic communities do so through scientific consensus.<sup>33</sup>

26. Youngs 2004, 27. See also Cox, Ikenberry, and Inoguchi 2000.

27. Carothers 1999, 6.

28. The democracy establishment is both a networked *actor* and also a networked *structure*. On this distinction, see Kahler 2009.

29. See Slaughter 2004, 14; and Keohane and Nye 1974.

30. Keck and Sikkink 1998.

31. Haas 1992.

32. Ikenberry 1993.

33. I thank the editors of *IO* for making this point.



Still, members of the democracy establishment share a common set of normative and cause–effect beliefs.<sup>34</sup> For example, in an ethnographic study of democracy assistance in the Balkans, Coles noted that OSCE election observers had to pass a test emphasizing the link between peace and democracy.<sup>35</sup> Although there are many definitions of democracy, a common international recipe for democracy assistance—focusing on the rule of law, elections, civil society, governance, women’s participation, and local political development—has emerged.<sup>36</sup> Many practices and institutions that are atypical in consolidated democracies are now hallmarks of developing democracies. Elections, for example, should be managed by independent electoral management bodies and monitored by international election observers.<sup>37</sup>

Where did the idea linking gender quotas and democracy come from? It has several sources, including democracy promoters’ principled beliefs, the efforts of female activists, the personal experiences of promoters, and practical considerations of what can be accomplished. Consistent with democratic expansion in consolidated democracies, democracy promoters have a principled commitment to gender equality. Some democracy promoters had personal experiences with quotas, being familiar with them from their home countries. For example, in 1989, the Ebert Foundation sponsored seminars, assemblies, and training booklets in Argentina on the German Social Democratic Party’s experience with quotas.<sup>38</sup> Argentina later passed a quota in 1991. Female activists also lobbied international organizations, including the UN, to pay attention to women’s rights.<sup>39</sup> Finally, working with women was a democracy-assistance strategy that seemed achievable and successful. It often (although not always) found partners in local women’s groups, helping the persuasive task of democracy promoters. It also had the advantage of being less threatening to leaders of countries where projects take place than other types of democracy assistance (for example, political party aid) because it did not directly challenge their hold on power; thus it was more likely to succeed. If authoritarian rulers do not allow democracy-establishment actors in to do work, these actors cannot obtain the funding necessary to survive.<sup>40</sup>

The democracy establishment’s professionalization spread common ideas about appropriate democratic institutions, such as quotas.<sup>41</sup> Three mechanisms of professionalization during the 1990s were critical. First, democracy assistance involves

34. Although the democracy establishment is not a monolith, this article sets aside its variations to focus on the development and impact of its basic shared beliefs.

35. Coles 2007, 238.

36. Magen and McFaul 2009.

37. See Kelley 2008; and Hyde 2008.

38. Crocker 2009.

39. Joachim 2003.

40. This is a real concern. For example, in 2006 Russia attempted to curb international democracy promotion by passing a law to monitor local and foreign nongovernmental organizations and criticizing OSCE election monitors; see Carothers 2006. On the “progress bias” in election monitor reports, see Kelley 2009.

41. Here I draw on DiMaggio and Powell’s concept of “normative isomorphism.” See DiMaggio and Powell 1983.

frequent turnover, or shifts and transfers of people across organizations and countries.<sup>42</sup> Such shifts cross-fertilize ideas and practices. For example, USAID launched a Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (CRDA) project in Serbia and Montenegro in 2001 that was modeled on a program that the mission director had previously overseen in Lebanon. Turnover creates a multinational group of experts in managing elections, supporting political parties, fostering independent media, and so on. Second, democracy assisters have learned over time. Since CRDA projects were viewed as successes in Lebanon and Serbia, similar programs were launched in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.<sup>43</sup> The concentration of democracy assisters in countries with international peacekeepers helps foster information transmission. Third, creating neutral, professional standards—such as the number of women that participated in a training session or that serve in parliament—is a survival strategy for actors in the democracy establishment in the competition to secure government funding.<sup>44</sup> Since democracy assistance organizations receive government grants through a process of delegation, it is crucial for them to find depoliticized and, where possible, numerical indicators that they can use to demonstrate progress to their funders.<sup>45</sup>

Such processes of professionalization cemented the idea that gender quotas are part of democratization within the democracy establishment. Today, according to one long-time international elections expert, in postconflict countries gender quotas have become something that “the international community pushes really hard for ... [as] just one of the expectations.”<sup>46</sup> In 2000, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 affirmed women’s role in postconflict reconstruction and “the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.”<sup>47</sup> Shared beliefs about the appropriateness of gender quotas for developing countries came to reflect both a worldview—or a general orientation in favor of gender equality—as well as a set of causal beliefs—or ideas about the efficacy of gender quotas at achieving equality in transitional countries.<sup>48</sup>

Interestingly, gender quotas are not conditions for foreign aid. In fact, they are sometimes controversial. For example, although the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) enacted quotas for the civil service and the quasi-legislative National Council, some officials opposed quotas for the Constituent Assembly. Still, after the National Council voted against quotas, UNTAET supported women’s participation by providing special funds for female candidate train-

42. Coles 2007, 24, 42.

43. Merritt 2006, 29–30, 40–41.

44. Guilhot 2005.

45. Girod, Krasner, and Stoner-Weiss 2009. See also Ferguson 1990; and Jackson 2005 for related discussions about development aid.

46. Interview with international election expert, by telephone, 30 January 2008.

47. United Nations Document S/RES/1325, 31 October 2000. Available at (<http://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/pdf/N0072018.pdf>). Accessed 22 September 2010.

48. Goldstein and Keohane 1993.

ing and giving parties with at least 30 percent female candidates extra time on UNTAET radio and television.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan stated that equal participation between men and women in decision making was necessary for peace.<sup>50</sup>

### *A Theory of How International Incentives Explain Quota Adoption*

This section offers a theory of how the democracy establishment's ideas about gender quotas affect domestic politics. The international concern with gender equality as part of democratization and the acceptance of quotas as an appropriate means to bring it about generate incentives for leaders in developing countries to adopt quotas. Doing so demonstrates countries' commitments to gender equality and democracy. When international involvement is highest—in postconflict countries with international peacekeeping forces—the adoption mechanism is closer to imposition.<sup>51</sup> When international involvement is lower but still strong—in countries that are concerned with increasing or maintaining their levels of foreign aid, foreign direct investment, international legitimacy, and the like—the mechanism is closer to inducement. Although the activism of domestic women may be necessary for quota adoption, we shall see that it is not sufficient.<sup>52</sup>

The democracy establishment's ideas lead to quota adoption both directly and indirectly. First, its ideas about gender quotas directly impact developing countries' laws through the democracy establishment's presence in postconflict countries. Since the Cold War's end, the UN has led more than two dozen postconflict peace operations that have promoted liberal democracy.<sup>53</sup> Although such operations' efficacy at promoting democratization has been debated, they do encourage countries to adopt some practices and institutions from the international model. In particular, international experts influence new electoral laws. Aid for writing or rewriting constitutions is a key form of democracy assistance. It involves expert advice as well as funds for constituent assemblies, constitutional commissions, and disseminating constitutions. Contrary to the stereotype of democracy assisters taking books on the U.S. constitution to transitional countries, however, legal quotas are a policy that many democracy-assisting countries themselves have not taken.<sup>54</sup>

49. See Pires 2002; and Krook 2006.

50. Ballington and Dahlerup 2006, 252–53.

51. Krook 2006, 311–15.

52. Women activists do matter. As discussed above, they focused international organizations' attention on women's issues. Furthermore, empowering local women is one way that the democracy establishment encourages leaders to adopt quotas. The cases discussed below, however, caution against assumptions that women activists or women in general will automatically support quotas or that such support is necessary for quota adoption.

53. Paris 2004.

54. Carothers 1999, 160–63.

Thus, countries hosting a liberalizing UN peace operation will be more likely to adopt gender quotas, all else equal. The presence of a UN peace operation has causal status since it leads to heavy involvement in the country by the democracy establishment, which transmits ideas and exercises influence over new laws. Actors in the democracy establishment do not control transitional countries' constitutions, but their preferences matter. At a minimum, the high degree of foreign dependence in postconflict countries creates a strong incentive for leaders to adopt female-friendly policies and follow internationally legitimate models. Furthermore, actors in the democracy establishment try to empower local women through special funds and training sessions; in so doing, they may enhance the domestic incentives to adopt quotas. At a maximum, actors in the democracy establishment push gender quotas in postconflict societies despite an absence of local support.

*H1: Countries where a democracy-promoting UN peace operation is present will be more likely to adopt gender quotas than other countries, all else equal.*

Kosovo illustrates this causal mechanism. Actors from the democracy establishment were part of a large international presence that included a UN mission, bilateral donors, and nongovernmental grantees from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). They emphasized gender equality as part of their programs to support democracy. For example, women-only meetings and special debates for female candidates ensured female participation in community programs.<sup>55</sup> In 2000, the UN Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) Regulation 39 also established a 30 percent quota for women among the first fifteen candidates on all party lists for local and national elections.<sup>56</sup> But the quota provoked a domestic backlash. Local elites argued that there were insufficient numbers of competent women candidates. After the first election, some elected women went so far as to resign in protest of what they said was an unfair international imposition.<sup>57</sup>

Second, the democracy establishment's ideas about what is appropriate for developing democracies indirectly create incentives for quota adoption. The democracy establishment's menu of appropriate practices and institutions for developing countries provides shortcuts for international and domestic audiences to tell if a country is liberalizing.<sup>58</sup> Thus, new and pseudo-democracies adopt gender quotas to demonstrate their commitment to liberal values. The process parallels the diffusion of inviting international election observers, in which Western states' rewards

55. Morin and Stinson 2001.

56. United Nations Document UNMIK/REG/2000/39, 8 July 2000. Available at [http://www.unmikonline.org/regulations/2000/re2000\\_39.htm](http://www.unmikonline.org/regulations/2000/re2000_39.htm). Accessed 22 September 2010.

57. Krook 2006, 314–15.

58. Previous research also shows how internationally legitimate ideas create resources for political action. See Hurd 2007.

for democratization after the Cold War encouraged first sincere and then insincere states to signal their commitment to liberal democracy by inviting observers.<sup>59</sup> Developing countries' tendency to adopt more legalized forms of gender quotas than developed countries lends credence to a signaling theory. But why choose the particular signal of quotas? First, since quotas enhance representation, they demonstrate that citizens' voices are being heard. Second, they may satisfy the demands of female activists. Third, in certain electoral systems, such as the single nontransferable vote, reserved seats can be used to quietly take away seats from opposition parties.

This article uses two indicators for the types of states that are likely to adopt quotas as a signal of their commitment to liberalism. First, they should be countries that are dependent on the West. National political leaders in such countries want to maintain good will and to demonstrate their good governance and liberalism. One indicator of dependence is foreign aid. As countries' foreign aid dependence increases, they will be more likely to adopt gender quotas. Foreign aid dependence is causally related to quota adoption since it directly measures material dependence.

*H2: The more foreign aid that a country receives, the more likely it is to adopt a gender quota, all else equal.*

Second, the type of state that will adopt gender quotas for signaling purposes should also adopt other practices or institutions that the democracy establishment views as appropriate. Beyond foreign aid dependence, there are a variety of incentives—both normative and strategic—that encourage leaders to perform democracy according to an internationally approved script. They include reputation, legitimacy (domestic or international), foreign direct investment, tourism, and foreign debt relief. Such motives are difficult to directly measure, especially in a cross-national framework, but my theory predicts that they should be evidenced both by inviting international election monitors and also by adopting quotas. Thus, inviting international election monitors serves as a proxy variable (not a causal variable) that captures countries' incentives to adopt quotas as a signal of liberalism that are not directly observable or measurable.

*H3: Countries that invite international election monitors to their most recent election will be more likely to adopt gender quotas than other countries, all else equal.*

Jordan illustrates the foreign-aid mechanism. King Abdullah II, who ascended in 1999, "has actively pursued stronger alliances and aid ties with the United States, Britain, and the European Union as well as international financial institutions such

59. See Hyde 2008; and Kelley 2008.

as the IMF and the World Bank.”<sup>60</sup> Jordan’s continued economic development hinges on privatization, foreign investment, and, especially, Western aid. For example, since 1964, Jordan’s central government annual current expenditures have closely tracked external aid receipts.<sup>61</sup> Over the same time period, foreign aid as a percentage of Jordanian central government budget expenditures hovered at around 25 percent (and never below 10 percent). Jordan’s ties with the West strengthened after 11 September 2001, when Jordan became a key supporter of the U.S. “war on terror.” In this context, Abdullah sought to improve the status of women in society and thereby burnish Jordan’s image abroad. One way to accomplish this was by setting aside six of the 110 seats in parliament for women in 2003.<sup>62</sup> The quota resulted in six female MPs but also some opposition. In the past, Jordanian women had campaigned unsuccessfully for a quota.<sup>63</sup> When Abdullah endorsed the quota by royal decree, however, he angered both the Higher Committee for the Coordination of National Opposition Parties, which issued a statement rejecting it, and also some female activists, who found that the quota discriminated against the urban areas where they lived.<sup>64</sup>

It is worth underscoring how this theory differs from previous research on the impact of norms in world politics.<sup>65</sup> Constructivist approaches argue that norm entrepreneurs socialize global audiences to new principled ideas that then become accepted and institutionalized. The mechanisms are first, persuasion, and then, socialization, institutionalization, and demonstration.<sup>66</sup> For example, in a study of the influence of norms on state behavior, Finnemore found that the social structure of the state system caused a convergence across all states in the creation of science bureaucracies, the acceptance of new rules of war, and the definition of development.<sup>67</sup> This article develops a theory, however, of how norms affect states differentially due to international inequalities. In the case of the spread of gender quotas, reserved seats for women proliferate in developing countries even as they remain off the table in many developed countries. Indeed, actors in the democracy establishment do not use the informational techniques of transnational activists, such as symbolism, leverage, and accountability tactics.<sup>68</sup> Instead, their ideas wield influence because they enjoy a privileged position in postconflict countries via peace operations and because of their perceived linkages to foreign aid, foreign investment, and international and domestic legitimacy. Table 1 below summarizes the causal argument.<sup>69</sup>

60. Clark 2006, 546.

61. Peters and Moore 2009, 271.

62. Clark 2006.

63. *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 November 2002, 7.

64. Clark 2006, 555.

65. Hafner-Burton 2005, however, takes a more similar approach.

66. Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 898.

67. Finnemore 1996, 24–25.

68. Keck and Sikkink 1998.

69. The table draws on Finnemore and Sikkink 1998.

**TABLE 1.** *The emergence, acceptance, and impact of the democracy establishment's ideas about gender quotas*

<i>Stage 1: Emergence of quota ideas</i>	<i>Stage 2: Acceptance of quota ideas</i>	<i>Stage 3: Impact of quota ideas on states</i>	<i>Testable predictions: Who will adopt quotas?</i>
<p><i>Why?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Activism of women's groups</li> <li>- Democracy assisters' principled beliefs</li> <li>- Democracy assisters' prior experiences</li> <li>- Democracy assisters' incentives</li> </ul>	<p><i>Why?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Processes of professionalization (turnover, standardization, and learning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Direct impact:</i> Pressure to adopt quotas when under international authority</li> <li>- <i>Indirect impact:</i> Inducements to adopt quotas when seeking to gain international aid, legitimacy, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Countries where there is a liberalizing UN peace operation (<i>causal variable</i>)</li> <li>- Countries that are aid dependent (<i>causal variable</i>)</li> <li>- Countries that invited international election monitors to their last election (<i>proxy variable</i>)</li> </ul>

## A Quantitative Analysis of the Sources of Gender Quotas

### *The Sample*

The unit of analysis for the quantitative analysis of the determinants of quota adoption is the country–year. The sample covers the years from 1970 to 2006 and contains all countries except long-term consolidated and developed democracies.<sup>70</sup> Long-term consolidated and developed democracies were removed because they are subject to different causal processes; they are neither under UN authority nor desirous of signaling their liberalism to the international community, and in fact, they promote democracy abroad.<sup>71</sup> I followed Finkel et al. and removed thirty advanced industrial, long-term consolidated democracies, which resulted in a sample of 165 countries for at least some amount of time.<sup>72</sup>

### *The Data*

I compiled data on quota adoption principally from the *Global Database of Quotas for Women*.<sup>73</sup> Because of my theory, I restrict my focus to national legal quotas since they are the quotas advocated by the democracy establishment and that signal a country's commitment to gender equality. I do, however, count a few cases of voluntary party quotas in which the adopting party was the incumbent in a noncompetitive system. Such cases are de facto legal quotas. For example, in 1994 the FRELIMO party adopted a 30 percent quota in Mozambique while it ruled as a single party for more than a decade after the country's civil war.<sup>74</sup> I measure quota adoption dichotomously: 0 if a quota has never been adopted and 1 if a

70. The analysis excludes Pakistan, which first adopted reserved seats in 1954, since most variables of interest are missing prior to 1970. Pakistan is, however, likely an outlier that involves different causal processes.

71. In the results presented here, I do not exclude countries that are coded by the Database of Political Institutions (available at <http://go.worldbank.org/2EAGGLRZ40>). Accessed 22 September 2010) as not having legislatures because several of these countries actually adopted gender quotas—such as Afghanistan in 2004 and Mauritania in 2006. In robustness checks, I did exclude these countries. See Beck et al. 2001.

72. Countries were excluded if they met the following criteria: they were classified by the World Bank as high income; they scored below 3 on Freedom House's scale; they received no aid from USAID between 1990 and 2003; and they were not newly independent states. See Finkel, Pérez-Liñán, and Seligson 2007, 414.

73. Database available at (<http://www.quotaproject.org>). Accessed 22 September 2010. Krook 2009 and additional primary and secondary sources were also used, which are available from the author upon request.

74. Single-party states were identified with the Database of Political Institutions' legislative index of electoral competition score. See Beck et al. 2001. The other cases were: the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia, which adopted a quota in 1997; the Congress for Democracy and Progress in Burkina Faso, which adopted a quota in 2002; the People's Democratic Movement in Cameroon, which adopted a quota in 1996; and the African National Congress in South Africa, which adopted a quota in 1994.



quota was adopted that year. The year of adoption refers to the year of ratification of the electoral laws or constitution.<sup>75</sup> I focus on the first time that a country adopted a gender quota. Although the dichotomous measure obscures some interesting variation in terms of types of quotas, it offers a good first cut for a cross-national hypothesis test. The Appendix lists the countries with legal or de facto legal quotas.

I measured international incentives as follows. First, countries are more likely to adopt quotas when a UN peace operation that promotes liberal democracy is present. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations provides peace operation mandates and mission summaries that were used to identify if the operation included support for elections or democracy.<sup>76</sup> It is a dichotomous variable: 1 if a UN peace operation with support for democracy took place in a country that year and 0 otherwise. Twenty-nine out of forty-five UN peace operations between 1989 and 2006 were coded as liberalizing.<sup>77</sup> Second, countries that are more dependent on foreign aid are more likely to adopt quotas. I used the natural log of the amount of official development assistance that a country received from OECD countries during the previous year in 2007 U.S. dollars.<sup>78</sup> Finally, the countries that are likely to signal their commitment to liberalism via quotas are likely to also do so by inviting international election observers. I used Hyde's data on international election observation to create a dichotomous variable, which assumes the value of 1 if international election observers monitored the country's most recent election and 0 otherwise.<sup>79</sup>

I next collected annual data to test world polity theory. First, the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report* indicates the number of years since women obtained suffrage in a country, as well as whether a country ratified CEDAW.<sup>80</sup> Second, I took the natural log of the number of INGOs and women's INGOs in each country in the previous year according to the *Yearbooks of International Organizations*.<sup>81</sup> Third, I calculated the percentage of countries in

75. Legal quotas do not tend to affect elections until the legal change occurs. For example, Afghanistan's parliamentary quota was ratified in law in 2004 and first affected the 2005 parliamentary elections.

76. Documents available at (<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping>). Accessed 22 September 2010. I searched each operation's mandate and mission summary for the words "election" and "democracy"; if either word appeared, I read the document to check if the UN was providing assistance for transitional elections and/or democratization.

77. Countries with liberalizing UN peace operations are not markedly different from countries with nonliberalizing UN peace operations in terms of pre-existing gender equality. For example, the average country in a year with a liberalizing peace operation gained suffrage in 1955, whereas the average country in a year with a nonliberalizing peace operation gained suffrage in 1957.  $p = .80$ ,  $t(0.85, 124.05df)$ .

78. Data available at (<http://www.oecd.org/dac>). Accessed 22 September 2010. Negative numbers, which indicate that the amount a country repaid on its outstanding loans was greater than the gross disbursements it received from donors that year, were transformed to zero. All skewed variables were transformed by taking the natural log after adding one.

79. Hyde 2008.

80. 2008 was the baseline year for recording suffrage years; Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates were coded as 0 although they have not granted women the right to vote.

81. Data on INGOs are from Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2007. Data on women's INGOs are from Wotipka's extension of Berkovitch's annual data, which I linearly extrapolated from 1999 to 2006. In

the world and in a country's region that had adopted quotas in the previous year in order to create diffusion variables.<sup>82</sup>

Finally, I collected annual data to test modernization theory, which argues that women's socioeconomic standing, democracy levels, economic development, and female-friendly public policies co-vary. The World Bank provides relevant yearly measures on women's socioeconomic standing; however, the data contain many missing values, which are not missing at random.<sup>83</sup> Thus, I present results here using the previous year's levels of democracy and economic development to capture modernization dynamics, although including variables such as the percent of the total labor force that is female does not alter the results substantively. Data on countries' real GDP per capita in logged current U.S. dollars came from the World Bank.<sup>84</sup> I used two measures of democracy: (1) an average of Freedom House's measures for political rights and civil liberties, which were rescaled so that 1 represents the least free countries and 7 the most free, and (2) the Polity2 variable from the Polity IV dataset, in which a score of 10 represents the most democratic and  $-10$  the most autocratic countries.<sup>85</sup> Since the effects of INGOs on the likelihood of gender-quota adoption may depend on the level of democracy in a country, in robustness checks, I interacted that variable with an indicator of democracy. I also created a dichotomous variable that indicates Islamic cultural heritage.<sup>86</sup> Table 2 reports descriptive statistics for the main variables.

### *The Model*

I used an event history model to estimate the likelihood of a legal quota being adopted in a country given that it had not already been adopted. This method is common in studies of policy diffusion because it can incorporate both internal and regional dynamics, deal with rarely occurring, one-time events (quotas are rarely-to-never repealed), and provides the probability of policy adoption at a given time.<sup>87</sup>

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robustness checks, I instead used the 1999 value for 2000 to 2006. See Wotipka and Ramirez 2008; and Berkovitch 1999.

82. I used the UN's regional classifications. Available at (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>). Accessed 22 September 2010. This variable may introduce some endogeneity, since according to world polity theory, a country's neighbors are influenced by their neighbors, which include the original country. New techniques are being developed to study spatial interdependence but unfortunately have not yet been developed for event history models. See Franzese and Hays 2009.

83. For example, women's primary school enrollment levels, life expectancy, and literacy levels relative to men's are all missing for well over half of the observations in the sample.

84. Available at (<http://www.worldbank.org>). Accessed 22 September 2010.

85. Freedom House does not consider quotas in its coding criteria, so there should not be simultaneity bias. Data and complete coding information are available at (<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=439>). Accessed 22 September 2010. See Marshall and Jagers 2007 for Polity IV.

86. Forty-seven countries qualify as predominantly Islamic. See Fish 2002.

87. Berry and Berry 1990, 411. See also True and Minstrom 2001; and Ramirez, Soysal, and Shahan 1997. Only two countries have repealed legal quotas: Colombia in 2001 and Egypt in 1986.

TABLE 2. *Descriptive statistics*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>N</i>
DEMOCRACY ( <i>Freedom House</i> )	3.60	1.89	1	7	4683
ISLAMIC HERITAGE	0.29	0.45	0	1	4926
YEARS SINCE FEMALE SUFFRAGE	52.05	19.47	0	90	4926
NUMBER OF WOMEN'S INGRES	17.46	16.07	0	101	4900
% QUOTAS IN REGION	0.06	0.10	0	0.43	4926
LIBERALIZING UNPKO	0.02	0.14	0	1	4926
INTERNATIONALLY OBSERVED ELECTION	0.27	0.44	0	1	4926
FOREIGN AID DEPENDENCE	150.05	334.70	0	10819.59	4504
U.S. DG AID	2.04	5.76	0	86.49	1987

*Notes:* The nonlogged versions of variables are provided in this table for ease of interpretation.

If a quota was not adopted by 2006, then the observation is right-censored. I used the semi-parametric Cox proportional hazard model because it makes no assumptions about the shape of the baseline hazard except that it does not vary across observations and because the model easily accommodates time-varying covariates.<sup>88</sup>

### *The Results*

Table 3 summarizes the results of the event history analysis.<sup>89</sup> Event history analysis yields hazard ratios; ratios significantly less than one indicate that a variable reduces the “hazard,” or likelihood, of adopting a gender quota, while ratios significantly greater than one increase that likelihood.

The variables suggested by modernization theory generally are not related to quota adoption in developing countries. Model 1 uses lagged democracy levels as measured by Freedom House and a country’s Islamic heritage to predict the likelihood of quota adoption. Not only are the variables statistically and substantively insignificant individually, but the model also fails the likelihood ratio test; that means that the variables are not jointly significant.<sup>90</sup> If included, a variable measuring countries’ lagged, logged gross domestic product per capita is, however, positively and significantly related to quota adoption. I omit it from Table 3 in the interest of comparison across models because this variable loses statistical signifi-

88. That assumption was tested by calculating the scaled Schoenfeld residuals. See Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004.

89. The Zelig software implemented the analysis. See Imai, King, and Lau 2007 and 2008.

90. Polity2 generates similar results although it is statistically significantly related to quota adoption in a univariate analysis. I use Freedom House because it covers a larger number of observations for the sample.

**TABLE 3.** *Who adopts gender quotas? An event history analysis*

Variables	Model 1 (Modernization)	Model 2 (World polity)	Model 3 (International incentives)	Model 4 (Full model)	Model 5 (Full model with DG AID)
DEMOCRACY ( <i>Freedom House</i> )	0.99 (0.07)			1.00 (0.08)	1.01 (0.10)
ISLAMIC HERITAGE	0.95 (0.35)			1.01 (0.33)	0.93 (0.40)
YEARS SINCE FEMALE SUFFRAGE		0.99 (0.01)		0.99 (0.01)	0.99 (0.01)
NUMBER OF WOMEN'S INGRES ( <i>log</i> )		1.87** (0.26)		1.37 (0.33)	1.36 (0.34)
% QUOTAS IN REGION		2.51 (1.42)		6.99 (1.67)	4.94 (1.68)
LIBERALIZING UNPKO			2.05* (0.43)	2.33* (0.46)	1.40 (0.58)
INTERNATIONALLY OBSERVED ELECTION			2.37*** (0.33)	2.35** (0.34)	1.98* (0.38)
FOREIGN AID DEPENDENCE ( <i>log</i> )			1.44*** (0.12)	1.40** (0.14)	1.17 (0.15)
U.S. DG AID ( <i>log</i> )					1.38* (0.19)
<i>N</i>	4518	4822	4358	4158	1909
<i>Log likelihood</i>	-253.8	-253.3	-236.7	-229.1	-196.2
<i>Likelihood ratio <math>\chi^2</math></i>	0.04	10.2**	31.1***	36.9***	27.2***

*Notes:* Exponentiated hazard rates were estimated from Cox proportional hazards regressions with the Efron method for ties. Robust standard errors, clustered on country, are in parentheses. Ratios significantly less (greater) than one indicate that a variable is estimated to reduce (increase) the likelihood of adopting a gender quota. \* $p < .10$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

ificance when included in fuller models and is missing a considerable number of observations.

The variables suggested by world polity theory fare better. Model 2 uses the natural log of the number of women's INGOs, the number of years since women attained suffrage, and the percentage of countries in the region with quotas to estimate a country's likelihood of quota adoption. Although the number of years since women attained suffrage and the diffusion variable were not important factors, the number of women's INGOs in a country is positively and statistically significantly related to the likelihood of quota adoption. Since a country's number of women's INGOs is highly correlated with its number of overall INGOs, however, it is difficult to separate the impact of countries' general ties to the world polity from the demands of female activists.<sup>91</sup>

Variables that measure international incentives are positively and statistically significantly related to quota adoption. Model 3 uses the presence of a liberalizing UN peace operation, the presence of international election observers at the last election, and lagged foreign aid dependence to estimate a country's likelihood of adopting a quota. All three variables have strong positive relationships with quota adoption. Model 4 reintroduces the variables from the other models. When included in a larger model with international factors, the number of women's INGOs ceases to attain statistical significance at conventional levels ( $p < .33$ ). The strong, positive relationships from Model 3 between quota adoption and international election observers, liberalizing UN peace operations, and foreign aid dependence persist, although the statistical significance levels are somewhat dampened.

My theory predicted that countries where the democracy establishment influences domestic laws via a democracy promoting UN peace operation would be more likely to adopt gender quotas. Another way to measure the democracy establishment's influence and presence in a country is by the amount of democracy assistance it receives. USAID provides data on its democracy and governance (DG) outlays to each country between 1990 and 2003.<sup>92</sup> According to my theory, this variable should also be positively and significantly related to a country's likelihood of adopting quotas. The U.S. government does not promote gender quotas as a policy. But democracy assistance programs, including U.S.-funded ones, are conducted by actors in the democracy establishment, who transmit ideas about gender equality and the legitimacy of quotas.

Model 5 includes the natural log of the amount of DG aid received by a country in the previous year. This model should be interpreted cautiously since the complex relationships between variables such as democracy and DG aid raise concerns about its functional form. But it does provide some interesting correlations. First, DG aid is positively and statistically significantly related to a country's like-

91.  $\rho = 0.77$ .

92. Finkel, Pérez-Liñán, and Seligson 2007. The data are available at (<http://www.pitt.edu/~politics/democracy/democracy.html>). Accessed 22 September 2010.

likelihood of quota adoption. Second, countries that invited international election observers are still more likely to adopt quotas, while countries with more linkages to the world polity or greater “modernization” are not. But the presence of a UN peace operation is no longer a statistically significant determinant of the likelihood of quota adoption.<sup>93</sup> This suggests that DG aid is indeed another measure of the underlying concept of the democracy establishment’s presence in a country. At the same time, Model 5’s reduced sample excludes many observations with neither liberalizing UN peace operations nor quotas, as well as several observations (for example, Sudan in 2005) with both liberalizing UN peace operations and quotas; the change in the sample also accounts for the decreased magnitude of the estimated hazard ratio for the liberalizing UN peace operation variable. Model 4 therefore serves as the base model for this study.

A good way to interpret the results is to simulate the percentage change in the hazard rate that is associated with a unit change in an independent variable. I shifted one independent variable at a time from the 25th to the 75th percentile, while holding all other numerical independent variables at their means and qualitative independent variables at their medians. The results for Model 4 are presented below in Table 4. We see that a country with a liberalizing UN peace operation is 157 percent more likely to adopt a gender quota than one without. Meanwhile, going from no observed elections that year to observed election(s) is associated with a 147 percent increase in the likelihood of adopting a gender quota. Finally, an increase from \$14 to 155 million 2007 U.S. dollars in foreign aid results in a 214 percent increase in the likelihood of quota adoption.

### *Robustness Checks*

A potential confounding variable is a country’s postconflict status. Previous research has found that armed conflict predicts women’s representation in developing countries due to the structural, political, and cultural changes that accompany civil war.<sup>94</sup> For example, postconflict countries’ populations skew female, which may make quotas politically advantageous. To test for this possibility, I replaced the UN peace operation variable in Model 3 with a dichotomous variable indicating whether a country is within five years of the end of a civil conflict. A country’s postconflict status is not, however, statistically significantly related to quota adoption at conventional levels although the estimated hazard ratio is greater than one.<sup>95</sup> This suggests that international involvement in postconflict countries is the key factor influencing quota adoption, rather than the postconflict setting in general.

93. The estimated hazard rate for foreign aid dependence also loses its statistical significance. Since the amounts of foreign aid and DG aid that a country receives are also positively correlated, this is not surprising.

94. Hughes 2009, 180.

95. The estimated exponentiated hazard ratio for the postconflict variable is 1.56 and the robust standard error is 0.32 ( $p < .17$ ). Data on civil conflicts came from Gleditsch et al. 2002.

TABLE 4. *Simulated hazard rates of gender quota adoption*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Shift</i>	<i>Mean increase in hazard rate</i>
NUMBER OF WOMEN'S INGOS ( <i>log</i> )	from 25th to 75th percentile (from 5 to 24 women's INGOS)	73% (-31%, 286%)
LIBERALIZING UNPKO	from 0 to 1 (from no operation to an operation)	157%* (-9%, 457%)
INTERNATIONALLY OBSERVED ELECTION	from 0 to 1 (from last election unobserved to internationally observed)	147%** (13%, 347%)
FOREIGN AID DEPENDENCE	from 25th to 75th percentile (from \$14 to 155 million 2007 U.S. dollars of assistance)	214%** (22%, 664%)

*Notes:* Simulated hazard rates estimated by shifting one variable at a time from Model 4 in Table 3, while holding all other numerical variables at their means and qualitative variables at their medians. 95 percent confidence intervals for the simulated first differences are in parentheses. Results were based on 1000 simulations from an asymptotic normal distribution. \* $p < .10$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

A final consideration is the robustness of the results when I analyze each region separately. This section's main finding—that liberalizing UN peace operations, foreign aid dependence, and inviting international election monitors are strongly related to gender quota adoption—still largely stands. Latin America, however, is an outlier.<sup>96</sup> Specifically, liberalizing UN peace operations are negatively and significantly related to a country's likelihood of quota adoption. Inviting international election observers and foreign aid dependence—measures of the democracy establishment's indirect influence—continue to be positively and significantly related to quota adoption. Prior democracy and women's INGOS, however, are also strong positive predictors of quota adoption.

What explains Latin America's difference? First, the international "supply" of quotas was weak. Many liberalizing UN peace operations in Latin America took place in the early 1990s. For example, the UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) supported elections in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua between 1989 and 1992 and the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) did the same in El Salvador between 1991 and 1995. I argue that the democracy establishment, and its ideas about the appropriate practices and institutions for developing democracies, emerged after the Cold War. The norm of gender quota adoption was therefore still in its infancy during many Latin American UN peace operations. In this sense, Latin America may be the exception that proves the rule.

96. One other finding of interest is that in Africa, democracy levels are negatively and statistically significantly associated with the likelihood of quota adoption.

Second, research on human rights shows that transnational human rights advocates have been unusually successful in Latin America. In other words, the domestic “demand” for quotas was strong. A recent review noted the large number of Latin American INGOs, the prominence of Latin America in U.S. congressional debates over human rights in the 1970s, and the early intellectual and religious roots of the region’s human rights discourse.<sup>97</sup> Especially in women’s rights, Latin America has been at the “vanguard,” with Evita Perón advocating for informal candidate selection quotas in the governing party in Argentina as early as 1951.<sup>98</sup> Subsequently, regional organizations, such as Parlatino (the Latin American Parliament), aided female advocates for quotas.<sup>99</sup> The historical legacy of quotas in Latin America as well as the relative efficacy of regional human rights actors there encouraged the region’s early adoption of quotas.

### **A Case of International Incentives? Afghanistan’s Quota**

The quantitative results confirmed my hypotheses, but the analysis has limitations. First, the relationships between UN peace operations, international election observation, and quota adoption could be spurious since these phenomena have become increasingly prevalent over time. Second, some measures for key concepts, such as women’s advocacy via INGOs, are blunt. A case study can check the results’ robustness through process tracing. Since the preliminary large-*N* analysis generated satisfactory results for my theory, I chose Afghanistan—a country that was well-predicted by the statistical model.<sup>100</sup> The analysis used published primary and secondary accounts, news articles, and sixteen key informant interviews. The interviews were used primarily to reconstruct events, as well as to corroborate existing sources and to establish what international and local elites thought. Thus, I identified the names of key international and Afghan people from published sources and then gathered a larger sample via snowball methods.<sup>101</sup>

Afghanistan adopted a gender quota on 4 January 2004, as part of a new constitution. The constitutional process began on 5 December 2001, after the U.S. invasion, with the Bonn Agreement, which called for “the establishment of a broad-based, gender sensitive, multiethnic and fully representative government.”<sup>102</sup> Gen-

97. Hafner-Burton and Ron 2009, 366–67, 377–79.

98. Jones 2009.

99. Araújo and García 2006.

100. Lieberman 2005, 442–43. The average residuals for Afghanistan from Model 4 in Table 2 were –0.03.

101. Interviews were conducted in English due to practical limitations; this should be borne in mind when interpreting the results. See Tansey 2007 on nonprobability sampling methods for elite interviews.

102. Available at (<http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/afghan/afghan-agree.htm>). Accessed 22 September 2010.



der sensitivity was of vital importance to the international community given the extraordinary repression of women under the previous Taliban regime.<sup>103</sup> UNAMA (the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) began in March 2002 to support the constitutional process. The constitution was first drafted in October 2002 by a nine-person commission appointed by Interim President Hamid Karzai, then reviewed in May 2003 by an appointed thirty-five-person constitutional commission, and finally approved by the elected and appointed 502-person Loya Jirga that met over three intense weeks starting in December 2003. The constitution reserves 27 percent of seats for women in the lower house, the Wolesi Jirga, and 17 percent in the upper house, the Meshrano Jirga. My theory predicts that without international incentives from the UN peace operation, there would have been no quota. I look at evidence of three observable implications from the theory. First, did international experts exert influence over Afghanistan's constitution through assistance and technical advice? Second, did actors from the democracy establishment, drawing on experiences from other transitional countries, view a quota as appropriate and necessary? Third, to the extent that Afghan women advocated for quotas, were they empowered by international actors? I examine each question in turn.

First, international actors did influence Afghanistan's constitutional process, although the interim government leaders' political concerns often drove the process. One high-level diplomat said that at the early stage of the nine-person drafting commission, one of the only concessions that was made to the international community was to include two women representatives.<sup>104</sup> The "signature" of UN special representative Lakhdar Brahimi had "been a 'light footprint'"; but once the constitution reached the stage of the thirty-five-person review committee, international experts Barnett Rubin, Yash Pal Gai, and Guy Carcassonne were enlisted to ensure that the text met "basic international standards."<sup>105</sup> Vigorous debate took place over presidentialism, the qualifications for office, the place of Islam in the constitution, and the electoral system. But international experts' greatest influence is said to have been on articulating the need for a women's bill of rights and for assurances that gender equality be properly reflected in the constitution.<sup>106</sup> Even after the constitutional process was over, the international influence remained strong; for example, in interviews conducted by the Heinrich Böll Foundation in 2007 and 2008, MPs complained that they have limited influence over Afghanistan's budget because the international community was sponsoring upward of 90 percent of it.<sup>107</sup>

103. Abirafeh 2009.

104. Interview with former diplomat to Afghanistan, Princeton, NJ, 29 April 2009.

105. See Rubin 2004, 10; and *New York Times*, 6 January 2004, A4.

106. See Reynolds 2006, 106–7; and author's interview with former diplomat to Afghanistan, Princeton, NJ, 29 April 2009.

107. The Heinrich Böll Foundation is part of the democracy establishment and has worked in Afghanistan since 2002 to support programs such as civic action songs and institutions such as the Women and Children Legal Research Foundation, the Afghan Women's Network, and the Tribal Liaison Office. See Fleschenberg 2009, 6, 18–19.

Second, members of the international community, especially at the UN, favored a gender quota for Afghanistan due to the belief that there needs to be some type of gender mechanism in a postconflict society.<sup>108</sup> Statements to this effect from key participants are especially suggestive because international actors in Afghanistan were keenly aware of the political importance of avoiding the perception that they had imposed Afghanistan's constitution. A quote from a former UNAMA political officer in Kabul and Bamain is illustrative:

The last thing you [the UN or other outsiders] want to show is your involvement because then they will not accept this constitution, saying that it's foreign, imported, and so on. It was a very, very sensitive issue. We had to keep as low a profile as possible. We had to not get involved in the essence of the issue but try to guide them. . . . We were not necessarily deciding, but through intensive consultations only certain things could be approved, not necessarily with the stroke of a pen from my side, but if, for instance, they had to have a quota or proportional representation from all factions and they didn't have that, I had to be alarmed and I had to tell them, "No, we have to have proper representation."<sup>109</sup>

As predicted by the theory, members of the democracy establishment often treated their work on gender, peace, and development as a technical project rather than as a political enterprise—to the frustration of some Afghans.<sup>110</sup>

Various events illustrate the international support for quotas in Afghanistan. U.S.-based efforts such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Project provided technical advice about how women's rights fit with Islamic law and Afghanistan's legal traditions and how best to implement gender quotas.<sup>111</sup> When Interim President Karzai decided to switch the electoral system from closed-list proportional representation to single nontransferable vote due to concerns over public confusion and his distrust of political parties, "many international organizations, foreign diplomats, UNAMA, and emerging progressive Afghan political and civil society movements" objected due to its potentially negative consequences for women's representation.<sup>112</sup> There was some debate within the international community over the form that the quota ought to take, with one suggestion that women's seats ought to be assigned via a special election. But despite different opinions about implementation, one international official said that some sort of quota was "clearly something

108. Interview with constitutional advisor to the UN, by telephone, 24 August 2009; interview with legal advisor to the UN, by telephone, 4 May 2009; interview with former diplomat to Afghanistan, Princeton, NJ, 29 April 2009; and interview with international election advisor to Afghanistan, by telephone, 5 June 2009.

109. U.S. Institute of Peace Afghanistan Experience Project, Interview with UNAMA political advisor, June 2005. Available at (<http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/histories/afghanistan/27.pdf>). Accessed 22 September 2010.

110. Abirafeh 2009, 64–65.

111. See Nawabi 2003; and Norris 2004.

112. Reynolds 2006, 107, 110.

that we lobbied for.”<sup>113</sup> The quotas for the appointed and elected members of the constitutional commissions and the Loya Jirga facilitated agreement over the eventual reserved seats. Indeed, as early as February 2002, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called for “temporary special measures, including targets and quotas, targeted at Afghan women” to accelerate women’s participation in decision making.<sup>114</sup>

Finally, Afghan women played an important role in the constitutional process. Women made up almost 20 percent of the constitutional commissions as well as the Constitutional Loya Jirga. Groups of these women, drawing on the example of quotas in Pakistan, advocated for reserved seats as well as other provisions.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, they successfully campaigned to double the proposed lower-house quota to 27 percent during the chaotic final constitutional negotiations with the support of U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Loya Jirga Chairman Sibghatullah Mojadedi, and international representatives.<sup>116</sup> Female advocates during the constitutional process were able to advocate, however, in part due to international assistance. For example, the international community, and specifically the United Nations Development Programme and UNIFEM, helped establish, fund, and provide technical expertise to the Ministry of Women’s Affairs to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the government. This Ministry later helped press for the quota. Furthermore, U.S. officials and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) convened meetings for Afghan activists with women from other regions and constitutional experts to prepare them for advocacy.<sup>117</sup> Karzai and international officials also promoted gender equality by selecting elite women’s advocates to participate in the constitutional process.

Urban Afghan women were mobilized by national and international organizations to lobby for quotas.<sup>118</sup> But other Afghan women, especially in rural areas, were not aware of the quota and some even expressed displeasure with it. A journalist interviewed eighty Afghan women in 2002 and found them generally unsupportive or unaware of the place gender quotas would likely have the constitution: “With the exception of the feminist Soraya Parlika, a member of the Constitutional Loya Jirga, no woman in Afghanistan voiced open support for a women’s quota to ensure women’s participation in politics. Many women were even surprised that one might demand such a quota.”<sup>119</sup> Among elite women that participated in the constitutional process, there was also some disagreement; one leader

113. Interview with former diplomat to Afghanistan, Princeton, NJ, 29 April 2009.

114. *Associated Press Online*, 20 February 2002. Available at (<http://www.rawa.org/annan-w.htm>). Accessed 22 September 2010.

115. Interview with former diplomat to Afghanistan, by telephone, 29 April 2009.

116. See Rubin 2004, 15; and interview with Loya Jirga representative, by telephone, 24 September 2009.

117. In 2003, the NED funded conferences, training sessions, and meetings to “draft recommendations on the status of women in the new Afghan constitution” and help women in Kandahar “prepare a detailed response to the draft constitution.” National Endowment for Democracy 2004, 86–87.

118. Interview with Afghan gender and development specialist, by e-mail, 18 August 2009.

119. Bauer 2002, 32.

at Bonn said that the quota should be temporary, stating, “We do not want charity.”<sup>120</sup> Although women have achieved some stunning successes since 2004—for example, nineteen women were elected to the Wolesi Jirga in the 2005 election without the aid of the quota—there is still much progress to be made. Forty-nine of the sixty-eight female members of the Wolesi Jirga that were elected in 2005 “owe[d] their election to the quota mechanism, having leaped over 422 male candidates who outpolled them.”<sup>121</sup>

Recent events in Afghanistan continue to illustrate the difficulty facing female advocates without the international community’s inducements and threats behind them. In April 2009, both houses of Afghanistan’s parliament passed the Shia Family Law, which formalized practices such as bans on married Shia women leaving their homes without their husbands. About 300 Afghan women protested in Kabul, but they faced “an angry throng three times larger than their own.”<sup>122</sup> After signing the law into effect, however, President Karzai later promised to amend it; the final version, which still retained many elements that international observers and local women found objectionable, came into force on 27 July 2009. Some Afghans suspect that the international furor over the law, which prompted U.S. President Barack Obama to decry the law as “abhorrent,” influenced Karzai’s reversal.<sup>123</sup> At the same time, Afghan human rights activists express frustration at how the international community champions them selectively. International actors exerted pressure only after the passage of the Shia Family Law despite activists’ earlier pleas.<sup>124</sup> The international community tends to focus on women’s legal standing—rather than responding to some activists’ more passionate concerns about safety, security, and economic opportunities.<sup>125</sup> After Karzai nominated no women to the Supreme Court and only one woman (the Minister of Women’s Affairs) to his cabinet in 2006, one female MP remarked with disappointment, “For now, women are more of a symbol, to impress the foreign aid donors.”<sup>126</sup>

In sum, the Afghanistan case helps confirm the quantitative analysis of quota adoption. First, the international community’s advice, pressure, and encouragement influenced Afghanistan’s constitution. Second, a key focus of that advice, pressure, and encouragement was for the inclusion of a gender quota, a policy that the international community (especially members of the democracy establishment) believed was appropriate. Finally, although many Afghan women argued in

120. *The Guardian*, 30 November 2001, 4.

121. Reynolds 2006, 115.

122. *New York Times*, 16 April 2009, A1.

123. See Oates 2009; *The Times*, 28 April 2009, 31; and “Karzai Signed Law Not Knowing Contents: Campaigners,” *Reuters*, 26 April 2009. This instance suggests a “boomerang pattern,” in which international actors generate leverage for local activists. See Keck and Sikkink 1998.

124. Interview with Afghan gender and development specialist, by e-mail, 18 August 2009. Many of the bill’s practices were already regular parts of life for women before the law officially sanctioned them. See also Abirafeh 2009.

125. Interview with Afghan civil society leader, by telephone, 6 May 2009.

126. See *Globe and Mail*, 1 May 2006, A11; and *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 April 2006, 9.

favor of an increased quota, they were selected and empowered by the international community. What continued events suggest is that the leaders of Afghanistan have few incentives to listen to women activists, while they have strong incentives to care about international “carrots and sticks.” Although Afghan women provided crucial local “buy-in” for the quota, they would have been unable to successfully demand it on their own. Their key concerns are furthermore not always what the international community chooses to champion. Thus, Afghanistan offers a plausible account of how the democracy establishment promotes quotas for women in postconflict countries’ new electoral laws. We are likely to find at least some degree of domestic demand for quotas in a country today; however, it is the international incentives for leaders to adopt quotas that are necessary in order to tip the scales in women’s favor.

## Conclusion

This article has argued that many gender quotas are adopted principally because of international rather than domestic pressures. They are not a product of modernization. Furthermore, they are not principally caused by states’ ties to the world polity. Instead, they are adopted by developing countries due to the direct influence of the international community in postconflict societies and the indirect inducements of the international community in countries that are concerned with foreign aid, foreign investment, international reputation, and legitimacy. The shared belief that quotas are necessary and appropriate for developing democracies within the field of international democracy assistance thus makes a significant impact on countries’ domestic politics. I have presented quantitative evidence from a cross-national event history analysis and qualitative evidence from the case of Afghanistan to show that this argument generally does a better job of explaining quota adoption than alternative theories.

Why should we care? First, quotas seem to matter. Tripp and Kang used cross-national regression analysis to show that quotas are the strongest predictor of the proportion of women in national legislatures.<sup>127</sup> And women’s representation seems to matter. Women’s representation has long-term impacts on the public’s political attitudes and female politicians tend to invest in different types of public-good projects than their male counterparts.<sup>128</sup>

Second, gender quotas are part of a broader story about the international community’s promotion of liberal democracy in the post–Cold War era that should interest scholars of world politics. Gourevitch once wrote about the “second-

127. Tripp and Kang 2008. Quotas also affect women’s representation after they are withdrawn. See Bhavnani 2009.

128. See Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007; and Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004.

image reversed,” or the international sources of domestic politics.<sup>129</sup> A growing literature now examines how international actors and laws promote or otherwise encourage the spread of a variety of forms of domestic liberalization.<sup>130</sup> This article makes a contribution to our understanding of such phenomena and expands our conception of the sort of policies that might be included. It also suggests a theoretical framework of direct international influence and indirect international inducements, and an important latent measure of leaders’ desire to adhere to international norms—inviting international election monitors—that can be used to study other diffusion processes.

Finally, this article raises important normative issues. The continued underrepresentation of women in the world’s democracies raises major concerns about political equality. Gender quotas, however, remain a controversial solution. My findings suggest that local gender equality is, in part, brought about by international inequalities, which help generate the incentives that are key for quota adoption in developing countries. Leveraging international inequality to bring about local equality is not a new phenomenon to students of human rights. Quotas, however, bring this dynamic into particularly sharp relief since they explicitly seek to overcome domestic power imbalances. Although legal quotas may yet spread to more developed democracies, the present study, which finds policy convergence among developing democracies, illuminates how international norms affect states differentially due to states’ varying incentives to adhere to them.

Further research could proceed along several lines. First, in addition to international election observation and gender quotas, two internationally legitimate policies that have been shown to go together, researchers could examine additional policies and institutions that the democracy establishment supports. Such a study might investigate whether liberal democratic policies can serve as signaling substitutes for each other, whether some policies are “worth more” internationally than others, and if policies tend to aggregate together or occur in certain sequences, or both. Second, the politics of the international actors in the “second-image reversed” have thus far received little attention.<sup>131</sup> Future research might probe more deeply the variations in the democracy establishment’s actors and how they relate to the emergence of common ideas such as gender quotas. Finally, scholars might explore whether findings that gender quotas have a significant effect on women’s representation, public policies, and political attitudes hold up when quotas are mostly adopted for international reasons. Research on the strategic adoption of human rights treaties and the ambivalent relationship between treaty adoption and human rights practices should give us some pause.<sup>132</sup> Nevertheless, if we find that gender quotas adopted due to international incentives succeed at increasing

129. Gourevitch 1978.

130. See Hyde 2007; Kelley 2008; Levitsky and Way 2005; Pevehouse 2002; Simmons 2009; and Simmons, Dobbin, and Garrett 2006.

131. The most notable exceptions are Kelley 2009; and Brown 2006.

132. See, for example, Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2007.

women's representation, we would not only have an interesting research puzzle to explore but good reason to be optimistic about progress in terms of gender equality.

### Appendix: List of Countries in the Sample that Adopted Legal or De Facto Legal Quotas, 1960–2006

Afghanistan (2004), Angola (2005), Argentina (1991), Armenia (1999), Bangladesh (1972), Bolivia (1997), Bosnia-Herzegovina (2001), Brazil (1997), Burkina Faso (2002), Burundi (2004), Cameroon (1996), Colombia (1999), Costa Rica (1996), Djibouti (2002), Dominican Republic (1997), Ecuador (1997), Egypt (1979), Eritrea (1994), Guyana (1998), Honduras (2000), Indonesia (2003), Iraq (2004), Jordan (2003), Kenya (1997), Liberia (2005), Macedonia (2002), Mauritania (2006), Mexico (2002), Morocco (2002), Mozambique (1994), Namibia (1997), Nepal (1990), Niger (2002), North Korea (1998), Panama (1997), Paraguay (1996), Peru (1997), Philippines (1986), Portugal (2006), Romania (2004), Rwanda (2003), Serbia (2004), Slovenia (2004), Somalia (2004), South Africa (1994), South Korea (2004), Sudan (2005), Taiwan (1997), Tanzania (1995), Tunisia (2004), Uganda (1989), Uzbekistan (2004), Venezuela (1997).

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