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**INTERSECTIONAL DISADVANTAGE  
AND POLITICAL INCLUSION:  
GETTING MORE AFRODESCENDANT WOMEN  
INTO ELECTED OFFICE IN LATIN AMERICA**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Afrodescendant women constitute an intersectionally disadvantaged group in Latin America. Race, gender, class, and other social structures combine to deny them equal status and opportunities in economy, society, and polity. Based on analysis of comparative experiences, this paper proposes mechanisms to improve their political inclusion. The majority of Latin American countries have already introduced national gender quota laws but very few apply policies for racial inclusion. Their adoption—which would create a system of “tandem quotas”—would promote the greater presence of Afrodescendant women.

- Though thirteen Latin American countries have national gender quota laws to improve women’s access to elected office, only three apply mechanisms to promote the representation of groups defined by race or ethnicity (Bolivia, Colombia, and Venezuela).
- Policies for racial and ethnic representation in the region have suffered from poor design and conceptualization, reflecting the challenges of racial classification, mobilization, and public policy in the region. What’s more, the number of seats allocated tends to be small and not proportional to population size.
- Worldwide, policy interventions to promote the political presence of historically excluded groups include national candidate quota laws, reserved seats, redistricting, low-threshold proportional representation (PR), and voluntary quotas. Different mechanisms are logically appropriate for differently situated groups.

- Afrodescendant women are more underrepresented than Afrodescendants as a whole and women as a whole. For example, they occupy merely one percent of seats in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies and no seats in the Colombian Chamber of Representatives in spite of constituting some 25 and six percent of the total national population, respectively.
- Comparative experience suggests that the combination of national gender quota laws and provisions for ethnic minority representation—a situation of *tandem quotas*—is the best way to improve the political presence of ethnic minority women.
- Unlike ethnic and racial groups in other regions, Afrodescendants do not form group-specific parties or cluster at one end of the party spectrum. This implies that the usual mechanisms to promote minority representation—such as reserved seats elected from special districts and low-threshold proportional representation—are not logically appropriate.
- Latin American countries seeking to improve the representation of Afrodescendants could consider racial candidate quotas, allocating a fixed number of legislative seats to people identifying as Afrodescendants, and electoral reforms to encourage parties to balance their tickets with diverse candidates.

## INTRODUCTION

Scores of countries have adopted laws to promote the inclusion of social groups historically excluded from politics. By 2011, some 70 countries enforced candidate quotas in parties or reserved seats in parliament for women, ethnic, and racial minorities. Dozens more without statutory measures uphold effective political arrangements to promote group representation, such as gender quotas used voluntarily by political parties in over 30 countries; ethno- or race-conscious districting; exemption from electoral thresholds for ethnic minority political organizations; and the overrepresentation of ethnic territories (Htun 2004; Reynolds 2005; Krook and O'Brien 2010; Quotaproject 2011).

These policies respond to demands from social movements and minority and female legislators for greater inclusion. They also conform to emerging global norms and standards of democratic legitimacy that focus on whether or not elected officials resemble, in their social identities and experiences, the population at large. Parliaments composed exclusively of upper-class white men—and other dominant social groups—are no longer seen to be legitimate representatives of public interests (Mansbridge 1999; Htun 2004; Krook 2009; Phillips 1995).

A considerable amount of scholarship has focused on whether or not quotas and other institutional interventions actually succeed at boosting group presence in power (Jones 2009; Htun and Jones 2002; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). Others have analyzed whether the participation of excluded groups in political office leads to the substantive representation of their interests (see, e.g., Swers 2002; Caul Kittilson 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo 2008). Fewer works have examined the questions

suggested by an intersectional approach. How have group representation policies affected the inclusion of subgroups disadvantaged by more than one type of oppression, such as minority women? (For recent analysis of this question, see Hughes 2011; Jenkins 1999; Moser and Holmsten n.d.)

In Latin America, Afrodescendant women<sup>1</sup> are constituted as a lower status group and denied equal opportunities by the gender order, racial oppression, class hierarchies, regional inequalities, and other social structures. These axes of domination and inequality add, multiply, and reinforce each other to craft the multiple social positions occupied by Afrodescendant women (Weldon 2008). As Dorothea Wilson put it, “It is very difficult to be black in our region, and even more so if you are a woman.”<sup>2</sup>

The specific concerns of black women have been historically neglected by the white-dominated feminist movement *and* the male-dominated Afrodescendant movement (Mosquera 2007: 98; Alvarez 1990). In several countries, Afrodescendant women have organized collectively and mobilized politically to promote their specific perspectives, raising awareness of the unique effects of race, gender, and other hierarchies on their status and opportunities.

Their efforts have led international organizations, national governments, and local civic groups to focus on racial dimensions of gender inequality and women’s rights. Instead of considering women as a homogeneous group, they contend, we need to analyze the intersection of gender with other dimensions of difference

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, “Afrodescendant” will be used interchangeably with “black” and “Afrodescendants” with “blacks.”

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Diego Cevallos, “Black Women on the Bottom Rung,” IPS, June 19, 2007.

including race, ethnicity, and class. Advances in the status of women overall do not necessarily imply that Afrodescendant or indigenous women are enjoying greater opportunities.

At the same time, it is insufficient to analyze the racial aspects of social inclusion without taking into account the differing experiences and trajectories of men and women. Data that reveal rising education or income levels among Afrodescendants as a whole, for example, do not tell us if the gains are equally distributed between men and women. As a result, greater numbers of men than women could be lagging behind (or vice versa). This would imply that social inclusion policies, far from helping the entire group, are affecting it only partially and even exaggerating intra-group inequalities. In summary, if the goal is equal rights, status, and opportunities for all, we need to analyze the ways that different structures of oppression combine, multiply, and intersect to shape citizens' lives.

This paper applies an intersectional approach to the problem of Afrodescendant women's underrepresentation. What are the main trends in Afrodescendant women's participation? Has the adoption of gender quotas in thirteen Latin American countries improved their chances? Do countries with racially-based affirmative action measures offer more opportunities to minority women? What lessons can we learn from the experience of other countries and regions?

For reasons of justice and democratic legitimacy, it is imperative that states act to improve the political presence of Afrodescendant women. How can they do so? After presenting some preliminary data on the status and inclusion of black

women in the region, this paper examines cross-national experiences with the election of minority women. We see that across a large sample of countries, tandem quotas—the combination of national gender quota laws and policies for ethnic minority representation—have boosted minority women’s inclusion. I then analyze the one Latin American country with tandem quotas—Bolivia—and the one country in the region with statutory mechanisms to promote Afrodescendant representation: Colombia. Finally, I present three policy interventions that national governments could consider.

## **AFRODESCENDANT WOMEN: AN INTERSECTIONALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUP**

Estimates suggest that Afrodescendants comprise up to one-third of the overall population of Latin America, amounting to between 80 and 150 million people (Del Popolo et al. 2009: 74). Women make up some half the population. When available, data reveal significant racial and gender inequalities in impoverishment, education, and wages. Since their status and opportunities are constrained by racial, gender, and other forms of oppression, Afrodescendant women occupy an acutely subordinate position in political office as well as other spheres.

### ***Data problems***

In general, data on race and ethnicity in Latin America are hard to come by. Though many countries historically gathered information on indigenous populations, not until 2000 did Spanish-speaking countries collect data on race (with the exception of Cuba). Still, only nine of 19 Latin American countries collected data on Afrodescendant populations in the 2000s and the criteria for counting differed across countries. This cross-national variation precludes good comparisons of racial inequality and the design of policies to combat racism (Del Popolo et al. 2009: 62; Telles 2010).

Census results on the numbers of minority citizens vary depending on what categories are used (examples include: *Preto*, *Pardo*, *Moreno*, *Mulato*, *Afro-colombiano*) and how the question is worded. For example, does the question state: “Are you x?” Or “are you a descendant of x?” “Do you consider yourself x?” “Do you

belong to x"? Are you a member of x group?" Does it refer to "skin color," "physical traits," "culture," or "ethnicity?" These variations matter. As Del Popolo and co-authors (2009: 65) put it:

These terms are not necessarily synonymous and...their nuances of meaning may compel an interview subject, merely by virtue of a particular term, to adopt distinct postures vis-à-vis their own ethnicity.

Studies have revealed that if the Brazilian census were to use the word *moreno* in addition to or instead of *pardo*, the Afrodescendant group would be bigger (Harris et al. 1993). Though the category *mestizo* usually denotes a mixture of indigenous and European elements, in Panama and Venezuela it may also include Afrodescendants (Telles 2010: 7). In spite of pressure from Afrodescendant movements for inclusion of additional categories, the Colombian census of 2005 opted for the term "*mulato*" (in addition to "Afro-colombiano," "afrodescendiente," and "negro") in spite of its low social salience (Htun n.d.).

What's more, criteria for counting tend to underestimate numbers of blacks. The internationally accepted standard for census counts is self-identification of racial and ethnic identity. All Latin American countries except for Cuba conform to this practice (Del Popolo et al. 2009: 63). Yet many people who are socially identified and treated as black are unwilling to self-identify this way because of racial stigmas and preferences for lighter skin. During their work on race and censuses in the region, "World Bank staff discovered that despite the quality of the questions asked, the level of technical support and the participation of Afro leaders, there was a low rate of self-identification as Afrodescendant" (Telles 2010: 8).

Telles and Lim (1998) found that in Brazil, estimates of racial inequalities based on interviewer classifications (which enlarged the groups of “blacks”) were greater than those based on self-classification. In 13 percent of cases, respondents and interviewers disagreed about who was “white.” As a result, the universal practice of self-identification may be systematically underestimating the extent of racial inequality throughout Latin America (see discussion in Telles 2010: 19).

No country collects information on the race, color, or ethnicity of elected officials. Even in Brazil, where data are otherwise plentiful, scholars must estimate the racial composition of the legislature by classifying photos on file with the National Electoral Tribunal or relying on self-declaration in private surveys. What’s more, criteria for external classification and for self-declaration vary. For example, several politicians in Brazil who have relatively fair skin color self-classify as black, while this is far less common in Venezuela.

### ***Social inequalities***

Data show that citizen well being is conditioned by race. In Brazil, for example, 43 percent of blacks (*pretos* and *pardos*) lived below the poverty line in 2006, a decline of nine points from 54 percent in 1995. For whites, the figures were 22 and 28 percent, respectively. This implies a 21-point gap in the size of the black and white impoverished populations relative to their total numbers (Paixão and Carvano 2008: 121). Not surprisingly, in 2006, blacks made up 66 percent of the poor. In Colombia, by contrast, poverty levels among blacks and non-blacks are relatively similar (Cruces et al. 2010: 25-6).

Racial gaps persist in education. The average educational attainment of a black Brazilian in 2006 was 6.2 years (an increase from 4.3 years in 1995). For whites, the numbers are 8.0 and 6.4, respectively. This implies a gap of 1.8 years in 2006 (slightly smaller than the gap of 1.9 years in 1996) (Paixão and Carvano 2008: 69). In Colombia, these gaps exist only among people who have completed twelve or more years of formal education: 19 percent of non-blacks versus 13 percent of blacks (Cruces et al. 2010: 52).

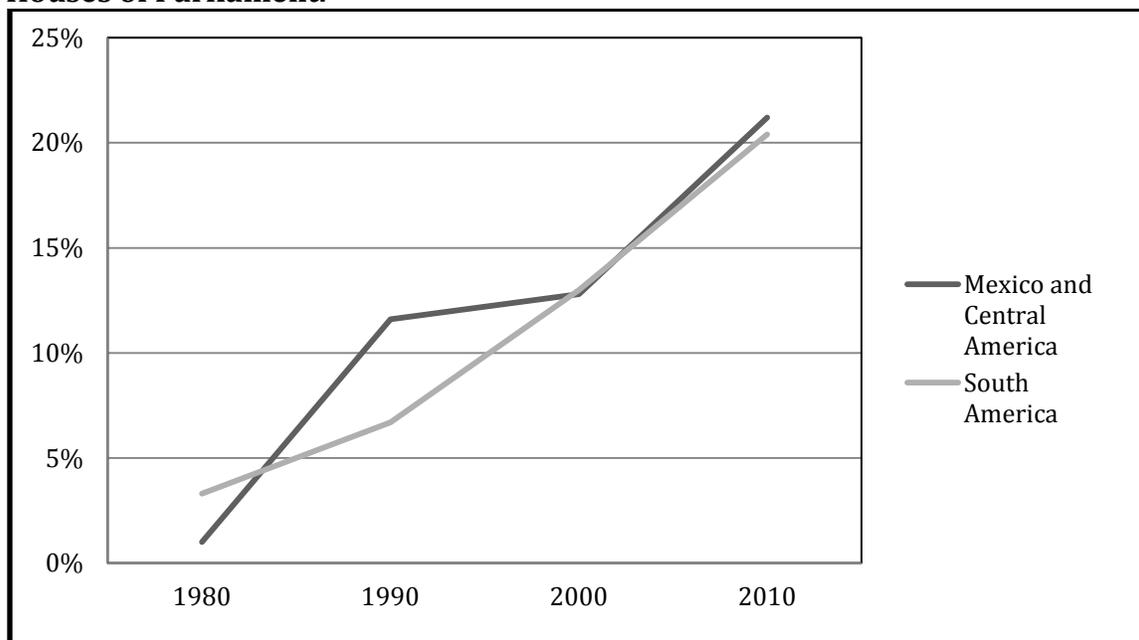
Minorities (including Afrodescendants and indigenous peoples) and non-minorities have unequal wages, as do men and women. On average in the region, non-minorities earn 38 percent more than minorities whereas men earn ten percent more than women (Atal et al. 2009: 13). A great deal of the ethnic and racial wage gap can be explained by observable characteristics such as education, occupation, economic sector, type of employment, and the size of the firm. Controlling for these factors in a subset of seven countries, the ethnic wage gap drops from 38 points to 13 points. Yet the gender wage gap climbs to 17 points when education is controlled for and 20 points when other variables are included (Atal et al. 2009).

The same study noted that women members of minority ethnic and racial groups have the lowest position in the labor market. The wage gap between white men and black and brown women is 60 points (though most of this can be explained by their differing educational levels, places of employment, and other variables) (Atal et al. 2009: 37).

### ***Political Inclusion***

However severe the inequalities at the societal level, they are more pronounced in elective office. Though women have made dramatic gains in political presence (see Figure 1), their numbers are not proportional to their presence in the population at large. As for Afrodescendants, Campbell Barr noted in 2007 that they make up a mere one percent of national legislators across Latin America; Afrodescendant women, a mere 0.3 percent (Atal et al. 2009: 8). This average figure masks significant variation among countries, though nowhere is Afrodescendant presence in politics proportional to their numbers in the population at large.

**Figure 1. Trends in Women’s Presence in Latin America’s Single and Lower Houses of Parliament.**



Source: Htun and Piscopo (2010).

In Brazil, the country for which data are most readily available, there were a total of 44 black federal deputies elected in 2010 (2010-2014 mandate) out of 514,

making up some nine percent of the total (See Table 1).<sup>3</sup> This includes seven Afrodescendant women. In 2006, there were 46 black deputies elected but only three women (Paixão and Carvano 2008: 148).<sup>4</sup> As this suggests, the number of Afrodescendant women elected to the lower house of the Brazilian congress doubled from three to six deputies in one electoral cycle. In addition, one black female deputy assumed office as an alternate, bringing the total to seven. Overall numbers of women stayed the same (at nine percent). No black women were elected to the Senate in 2006 or 2010, though the total number of women skyrocketed from four to thirteen.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 1. Afrodescendants in the Brazilian Congress**

	TOTAL NUMBER OF BLACKS	NUMBER OF BLACK WOMEN	TOTAL NUMBER OF WOMEN	BLACK WOMEN AS % OF BLACK MEN	BLACK WOMEN AS % OF TOTAL WOMEN	TOTAL NUMBER OF LEGISLATORS
2006 Chamber	46	3	45	7%	7%	513
2006 Senate	5	0	4	0%	0%	81
2010 Chamber	44	7	44	16%	16%	513
2010 Senate	n.a.	0	13	n.a.	n.a.	81

Source: Paixão and Carvano 2008; “Congresso em foco” (see footnote 3).

These numbers mark a dramatic improvement over previous decades. In the 1990s, for example, there were only about 15 black deputies in the lower house of

<sup>3</sup> For a count, see “Os deputados que se autodeclaram negros.” Available at: [http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticia.asp?cod\\_canal=21&cod\\_publicacao=36175](http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticia.asp?cod_canal=21&cod_publicacao=36175).

Date accessed: July 11, 2011. I added one person (Eliane Rolim—PT/RJ) to the list. As a *suplente*, she was not part of the original count.

<sup>4</sup> There is no official data on legislator race or ethnicity in Brazil or any opportunity for elected officials to declare their race or ethnicity. The 2006 data mentioned here are based on subjective classification of photos by the research team at the Laboratory for Statistical, Economic, and Social Analysis of Race Relations (LAESER) in Rio de Janeiro (Paixão and Carvano 2009: 145).

<sup>5</sup> In 2006, five of 81 senators were black men. Data for 2010 were not available.

Congress (Johnson 1998). Still, it is important to bear in mind that Afrodescendants make up about half of the Brazilian population.

In both chambers, black legislators do not concentrate ideologically: they were elected from parties across the political spectrum. In the Lower House in 2006, some 45 percent of black deputies were elected from Leftist parties and some 55 percent from parties of the Center and Right. Afrodescendants were relatively more numerous in two small parties: the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B; four of 13 deputies) and the Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL; one of three deputies) (Paixão and Carvano 2008: 149-51).

In 2010, six of seven black women in the Chamber of Deputies are from parties of the Left: four were elected by the Labor Party (PT) and two by the PC do B. Only one deputy—Andreia Zito of the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB)—came from a Center party. No black female deputies were elected from parties of the Right, suggesting that their path to power may be distinctive from those of Afrodescendant men.

In Colombia in 2011, Afrodescendants made up a mere four percent of the Chamber of Deputies (some seven of 166) and two percent of the Senate (two of 102). There were no women among them.<sup>6</sup> Overall, women made up 13 percent of deputies and 16 percent of senators.<sup>7</sup> As in Brazil, Afrodescendants in the Colombian congress are affiliated with a broad range of political parties.

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<sup>6</sup> These data are based on author's classification of legislator photos on the Congreso Visible website: <http://www.congresovisible.org/congresistas/>. Date accessed: June 23, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Data gathered from Parline Database. [http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2068\\_A.htm](http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2068_A.htm). Date accessed: June 23, 2011.

Rough estimates suggest that Afrodescendants could make up approximately seven percent of the Venezuelan parliament (11 of 165).<sup>8</sup> These numbers include some three women afrodescendants (27 percent of the total number of afrodescendants). Overall, women constitute 17 percent of the single chamber (28 total).

These preliminary data on the race of legislators in Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela suggest the following conclusions. First, Afrodescendants are underrepresented in all countries relative to their population size. Though their numbers have grown—particularly in Brazil—they are not even close to mirroring the composition of the country.

Second, Afrodescendant women are even more underrepresented than the black group as a whole and than women as a whole. Their numbers in power—even in the best case of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies—amount to less than one-fifth of either category. Campbell Barr notes that in its history, Colombia has seen a mere seven Afrodescendant women elected to Congress. In 2007, the national assemblies of Nicaragua and Honduras had one black woman deputy and one alternate each (Campbell Barr 2007).

The movement of more women into power has affected intersectionally-disadvantaged women at a much slower rate. As Campell Barr (2007: 4) describes:

Women from the most discriminated groups are aware of their situation but they lack the necessary tools to combat the enormous challenges society imposes on them. To get to decision making

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<sup>8</sup> As in the case of Colombia, these data are based on the author's classification of legislator photos on the congressional website. [http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/index.php?option=com\\_ficha&sw=diputado&Itemid=88&lang=es](http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/index.php?option=com_ficha&sw=diputado&Itemid=88&lang=es). Date accessed: June 23, 2011.

positions, they have to confront ferocious competition with less education and a more severe workload.

The challenges faced by women from minority racial and ethnic groups are not unique to Latin America. Based on her analysis of some 80 countries, Hughes (2011) finds that minority women's odds of getting elected to the national legislature are 1 in 14 compared to majority men, 1 in 2 compared to minority men, and 1 in 3 compared to majority women.

Third, when they do gain access to elected office, Afrodescendants tend not to come from a group-specific (ethnic or racial) party. Nor do they tend to cluster in a particular political party or group of parties. One exception is the 2010 Brazilian Congress, where six of seven black female deputies were elected from parties of the Left. In general, Latin America's Afrodescendants are represented across the political spectrum and seem to be supported by voters of multiple ethnic and racial backgrounds. In Moser's (2008) model of minority representation, they are at the "assimilated" rather than the "ethnic mobilization" end.<sup>9</sup>

This tendency to cross cut the party system is consequential for strategies to improve their political presence, as we will see below. It implies that interventions to secure the inclusion of minority political *parties* and *organizations* may not be appropriate for Afrodescendants in the region. Instead, we should consider policies to promote the presence of Afrodescendant *individuals* within mainstream parties.

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<sup>9</sup> To be sure, some groups of Afrodescendants in the region are culturally distinct and practice more classical modes of ethnic politics. The majority, however, do not.

## POLICIES TO PROMOTE INCLUSION

Scores of countries around the world have introduced mechanisms to improve the political representation of historically excluded groups. In Latin America, 13 countries have national gender quota laws and a fourteenth, Colombia, enforces a 30 percent quota for leadership positions in the executive branch. Merely three countries apply policies to promote the political inclusion of groups defined by race or ethnicity: Bolivia, Colombia, and Venezuela (See Table 2).<sup>10</sup>

**Table 2. National Quotas and Reservations for Women and Minorities in Latin America**

COUNTRY	DATE OF LAW	DETAILS
<i>By Gender</i>		
Argentina	1991	30% of candidates for lower and upper house
Bolivia	1997	50% of candidates for lower and upper house
Brazil	1997	30% of candidates for lower house, state legislature, and municipal council elections
Colombia	2000 2011	30% of appointed executive posts 30% of candidates for lower and upper house
Costa Rica	1997	40% of candidates for unicameral parliament and municipal councils
Dominican Republic	1997	33% of candidates for lower house
Ecuador	1997	45% of candidates for unicameral parliament
Honduras	2000	30% of candidates for unicameral parliament
Mexico	1996	30% of candidates for lower and upper house
Panama	1997	30% of candidates in primary elections for unicameral parliament
Paraguay	1996	20% of candidates in primary elections for lower and upper house
Peru	1997	30% of candidates for unicameral parliament
Uruguay	2009	33% of candidates for lower and upper house (to be applied in 2014)
<i>By race or ethnicity</i>		
Bolivia	2009	7 lower house seats reserved for “originary peoples”
Colombia	1991	2 senate seats reserved for indigenous peoples; 2 house seats for black communities; 1 house seat for indigenous peoples
Venezuela	1999	3 congressional seats reserved for indigenous peoples

Sources: Jones 2009; [www.quotaproject.org](http://www.quotaproject.org); recent data collection by author.

<sup>10</sup> Peru requires that 15 percent of candidates in 11 of 25 regions be members of “native communities.” Since it is not a nationally-applicable law, this provision is not included in Table 2.

Different policies are logically appropriate for differently situated groups (Htun 2004). Whether or not a group is concentrated geographically and whether its boundaries cross cut or coincide with partisan divisions implies a particular policy for political inclusion. Not every measure will work for every group. It is difficult to improve women’s representation by redistricting, for example, because they are not geographically concentrated. Since women tend not to form gender-specific political parties, but to join a variety of mainstream parties, policies such as low-threshold proportional representation or reserved seats for group-specific organizations will not work either. Yet it is important to bear in mind that governmental choices are shaped not just by logical appropriateness but also by institutional legacies, policy repertoires, and political interest (Htun 2004; Krook and O’Brien 2010).

This section analyzes the variety of official interventions that promote the inclusion of historically excluded groups. I distinguish between statutory measures on the one hand and voluntary arrangements on the other. Within the category of statutory measures, we can further differentiate group-specific policies and group-neutral ones (See Table 4).

**Table 4. Policies to Promote Political Inclusion**

	<b>GROUP-SPECIFIC</b>	<b>NON GROUP-SPECIFIC</b>
Statutory measures	*Candidate quotas *Reserved seats *Legislative allocations *Over-representation of ethnically-dominated regions	*Redistricting *Low-threshold PR
Voluntary arrangements	*Candidate quotas adopted by parties for women, ethnic minorities, immigrants	

Source: elaboration by author.

### ***Statutory, group-specific measures***

These formal laws and policies name particular groups as beneficiaries (women, India's Scheduled Castes, New Zealand's Maoris, Colombia's *comunidades negras*) and are the responsibility of the government to uphold.

**Candidate quotas**, by far the most prevalent measure, stipulate that a group constitute a minimum percentage of candidates postulated by political parties in competitive elections. The Argentine *Ley de Cupos*, for example, states that: "Women must account for a minimum of 30 percent of positions on party lists and they must have a realistic chance of election. No list will be accepted that does not conform to these requirements."<sup>11</sup>

Since these national laws are universally applicable, they are most appropriate for groups who participate, but have been excluded from leadership, in all parties in a system. In theory, candidate quotas elevate individual group members from subordinate places to high positions on party lists where they stand a real chance of getting elected.

They are not appropriate for groups who tend to concentrate in one party or in group-specific parties or organizations. In fact, candidate quotas can be counterproductive in these circumstances. If indigenous peoples in country X tend to support one or two indigenous parties, a law requiring all parties to include them on lists would actually undermine the indigenous cause. Mainstream parties would poach indigenous leaders from group-specific organizations to comply with the law (Htun 2004).

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<sup>11</sup> Ley Nacional 24.012. Available at: [http://www.cnm.gov.ar/LegNacional/Ley24012\\_decreto1246.pdf](http://www.cnm.gov.ar/LegNacional/Ley24012_decreto1246.pdf). Date accessed: July 8, 2011.

Recently, however, candidate quotas have been applied in countries with histories of severe ethnic strife, seemingly to prevent political polarization. In Burundi, the 2005 constitution requires that parties postulate multi-ethnic lists in elections. The lists must contain Hutu and Tutsi candidates in a 60-40 ratio and 30 percent of them must be women (the population as a whole is about 85 percent Hutu and 14 percent Tutsi).<sup>12</sup> It is not clear whether this strategy has worked, however, since political parties seem still to conform to ethnic divisions. (See discussion on Parline site.)

**Reserved seats** set aside a fixed number of parliamentary seats for members of a particular group. These seats are filled through election from special districts in which only group members can compete (such as districts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in India), separate voter rolls (such as New Zealand's Maori voting roll, no longer in use), exceptions to counting rules (facilitating the election of minority group members who have received fewer votes than majority group members in the same election), appointment, and other mechanisms (for more details, see Htun 2004).

These policies name particular groups as beneficiaries. In addition, they require that candidates—and sometimes voters—be identified and categorized as group members. This presumes—and likely creates—some fixity to group identities. Lebanon's parliamentary seats, for example, are divided equally between Muslims and Christians and then further allocated to 11 different religious confessions. Only

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/bur4.htm#fn2>. See also: [http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2049\\_E.htm](http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2049_E.htm). Date accessed: July 1, 2011.

sect members can run for confession-specific seats though the electorate as a whole in each multi-member district can vote for them (IFES 2009).

In Colombia, by contrast, the law requires only that candidates contesting reserved seats for Afro-Colombians be sponsored by an organization registered with the Interior Ministry. They are not legally required to be of a black “race.”<sup>13</sup> What’s more, voters of any color can opt to vote in special national districts for these candidates (Htun n.d.; Giraldo and López 2007).

Many reserved seat arrangements are found in heterogeneous countries—such as Lebanon, Belgium, and Fiji—with a history of ethnic conflict. They are intended to give each group a share of power and a stake in the stability of the political system. In other countries including India, New Zealand, and Singapore, reservations are a form of affirmative action to give minority groups a voice in a majority group-dominated political system.

Some reserved seat systems establish routes to power that are independent of mainstream parties.<sup>14</sup> In these situations, the presumption is that the groups prefer not to be integrated into mainstream parties and/or that they would lose out in general electoral competition. Many Bolivian indigenous movements, for example, wanted to retain autonomy from mainstream parties and demanded that they be permitted to choose representatives for reserved seats through *usos y costumbres*,

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<sup>13</sup> As of 2011, however, no non-black candidates have contested the seats.

<sup>14</sup> An exception is Singapore, where the law sets aside 15 seats for members of Malay, Indian, and other minority communities. Candidates win these seats, however, through their placement on the lists of the political parties contesting elections in multi-member districts. The law requires that parties contesting the multi-member districts include a minority politician on their list. Since lists are closed and parties win according to a winner-take-all formula (as opposed to Proportional Representation), the election of minority group members is guaranteed.

which could involve rotation, collective deliberation, appointment, or voting (Htun and Ossa 2010).

Other systems consist of legislative allocations for individual members of certain groups. The law sets aside a certain percentage of parliamentary seats, the election is held, and the seats are then filled by making adjustments to electoral results. In Afghanistan, for example, the law upholds a 27 percent legislative allocation for women. Female candidates compete in the elections alongside men in multimember districts (provinces). Once the results come in, officials calculate the number of female winners. If it has not reached 27 percent of the total, they select the top women vote getters until the 27 percent threshold is reached. The remaining 73 percent of the seats are allocated to men in the order of votes they receive.<sup>15</sup>

**Over-representation of regions** increases the number of representatives—relative to population size—elected from geographical areas where ethnic or racial minorities are concentrated. The United Kingdom, Tanzania, Denmark, and Finland overrepresent ethnically-defined territories in their popularly elected lower houses (including Scotland and Zanzibar) (Reynolds 2005: 303).

### ***Statutory, non group-specific policies***

Other more general electoral interventions may improve the representation of targeted groups in politics.

**Redistricting** involves drawing the boundaries of geographical districts around areas of where group members are concentrated. These so-called majority-

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<sup>15</sup> See [http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2381\\_B.htm](http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2381_B.htm). Date accessed: July 8, 2011.

minority districts were established in the United States after the Voting Rights Act was amended to require that black and Latino citizens be allowed to elect a “candidate of their choice,” which the authorities understood to mean someone of their own ethnic group.<sup>16</sup> Ukraine also practices minority-conscious districting.

In general, a redistricting strategy works best for groups that are geographically concentrated and when voting behavior tracks ethnic identification. Some countries, however, have allocated districts to particular minority groups by law. Every ten years, India identifies those single-member districts where only members of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Tribes (ST) can run for parliament. Often, SC and ST voters are not the majority in those districts.

**Low threshold proportional representation (PR)** allows even very small parties to gain access to elected office. The purpose of a PR threshold (which establishes a minimum percentage of the vote required to gain a seat) is to minimize the number of parties in a legislature, thereby reducing collective action problems and increasing the chance of effective decision making. High thresholds, however, make it more difficult for groups with smaller or more dispersed support to win office. Some countries uphold exceptions to PR thresholds for parties representing ethnic minorities, including Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Romania (Reynolds 2005; Htun 2004: 440).

It is not clear that the electoral success of ethnic parties—through low-threshold PR, among other measures—would help women. Comparative analysis has found that ethnic parties (parties appealing to particular ethnic, religious, or

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<sup>16</sup> The law does NOT require that the person elected is of the same ethnic group. But they assumed that these districts would elect someone of the majority ethnic group.

regional groups) tend to elect slightly fewer women than non-ethnic parties (Holmsten, Moser, and Slosar 2010).

### ***Voluntary arrangements***

Voluntary arrangements are not enforced by the state but adopted by political parties or other organizations. These may include candidate quotas, targets, or benchmarks. Dozens of countries have parties with voluntary quotas for women candidates.<sup>17</sup> They can be effective: the high levels of women's presence in Northern European countries such as Sweden and Norway owe not to national quota laws but to policies voluntarily adopted by their parties (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005).

In Sweden, most parties have "soft quotas" (or loose targets) for the inclusion of immigrants on party lists (Rickne 2011). Some parties in India use ethnic quotas for leadership posts (Chandra 2004). In the German state of Berlin, the Social Democratic party has debated introducing a candidate quota for people of immigrant background (Davidson-Schmich 2011).

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<sup>17</sup>For a list of these, see [www.quotaproject.org](http://www.quotaproject.org) and [www.iadb.org/research/geppal](http://www.iadb.org/research/geppal).

## COMPARATIVE EXPERIENCES

Since so many countries have applied group representation policies, it makes sense to examine their experiences for clues as to how best to promote the inclusion of Afrodescendant women in Latin America. One hypothetical possibility is a “nested quota” requiring that women be included among minority ethnic groups or that ethnic minorities be included within a women’s quota (Hughes 2011). Yet no country has officially introduced such an intervention. In fact, I know of no specific mechanisms designed to promote the presence of intersectionally-disadvantaged categories of citizens, that is, people who could be covered by more than one type of quota.

A more fruitful line of inquiry is to assess the ways in which policies designed for one excluded group—such as women *or* ethnic minorities—affect citizens disadvantaged by both identities (ethnic minority women). In addition, we should consider whether the simultaneous application of both types of policies—for example, in a country that uses gender quotas *and* ethnic minority reservations—helps to promote the inclusion of ethnic minority women.

### ***Tandem quotas***

Fortunately, one recent study has analyzed these questions. Hughes gathered data on the presence of women, minorities, and minority women in national legislatures in some 80 countries in the mid-2000s with the objective of identifying the policies associated with their greater representation. She found that a combination of national, statutory gender quotas and reserved seats for minority

ethnic groups—a policy she calls *tandem quotas*—is significantly associated with the election of more minority women to the legislature (Hughes 2011).

On their own (in the absence of the other policy), national gender quota laws and reserved seats policies helped minority women, but to a much lesser degree. Hughes's analysis also assessed the effects of other variables, including level of development, women's labor force participation, the strength of Left parties, and the type of electoral system. None of these variables had a significant effect on minority women's inclusion, highlighting the importance of group-specific policy interventions.

Hughes's analysis implies that the most effective way to promote the inclusion of minority women in the legislature is to adopt, not just a national gender quota law or reserved seats for ethnic or racial groups, but both policies simultaneously. The small group of countries with these tandem quotas has significantly higher levels of minority representation than countries with other types of quotas. Hughes tentatively concludes that tandem quotas are the policy intervention that most effectively challenges the political hegemony of light-skinned men (Hughes 2011).

Why are tandem quotas particularly effective? Paradoxically, they allow men from the majority group to comply with both quotas at the least cost to themselves (Hughes 2011). By adding women from minority ethnic groups to party lists and/or the legislature, parties and political elites satisfy both types of quotas simultaneously. Their dual status as women *and* minorities renders minority women privileged beneficiaries of a tandem quota system. On the other hand,

women from majority groups and men from minority groups are slightly disadvantaged by tandem quotas.

In Burundi, one of the handful of countries with tandem quotas, 57 percent of women in the legislature come from ethnic minorities, even though minorities make up only 15 percent of the country as a whole. The Constitution requires that minorities occupy 40 percent of legislative seats and imposes a 30 percent gender quota (Hughes 2011).<sup>18</sup>

### ***Bolivia***

Latin America has one country with tandem quotas: Bolivia.<sup>19</sup> Bolivia has a gender parity law requiring that women constitute 50 percent of candidates and it also reserves seven parliamentary seats for *pueblos originarios*.<sup>20</sup> Afro-Bolivians are granted the same rights as *pueblos originarios* in the Constitution, including rights to political representation. In 2011, there was one Afro-Bolivian deputy in the lower house of Congress, elected from a reserved seat the group shares with five other constitutionally-recognized ethnic groups in the province of La Paz.<sup>21</sup>

Parties and groups contesting the reserved seats must comply with the gender parity law. However, the law is applied loosely in the single-member and

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<sup>18</sup> Hughes calls for caution in interpreting her results since only five countries in the analysis actually have tandem quotas and one of these (Romania) has an ineffective gender quota law. Another of the five countries—Bosnia Herzegovina—has a divided legislature between Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks.

<sup>19</sup> Bolivia's ethnic reservations are relatively recent (from 2009) and not included in Hughes's analysis.

<sup>20</sup> These seats are primarily intended to offer a guarantee of presence for Bolivia's minority ethnic groups and not for the Quechua and Aymara who constitute some 30 and 24 percent of the population, respectively. Indigenous movements had originally wanted 36 reserved seats (including one each for the Quechua and Aymara) but ended up with only seven (Htun and Ossa 2010).

<sup>21</sup> Jorge Medina Barra of the MAS was elected to the department of La Paz's special district in 2010. Information from: [http://www.diputados.bo/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=97](http://www.diputados.bo/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=97). Date accessed: July 14, 2011.

reserved seat districts: parties may comply by including women as alternates (*suplentes*).<sup>22</sup> In the 2009 elections, the two largest parties—Movement toward Socialism (MAS) and Plan Progress for Bolivia (PPB)—nominated women as titular candidates in a mere 11 percent of single-member districts (Htun and Ossa 2010: 26). This tendency was pronounced in the reserved seats: no deputy elected from a reserved seat in 2009 was a woman but all of the *suplentes* were.<sup>23</sup>

Notwithstanding their symbolic importance, Bolivia's reserved seats are not the main vehicle for indigenous representation. Rather, the principal way indigenous peoples have gained access to power has been through the MAS. Though not a classically ethnic or indigenous party (since it has a mixed constituency and arguably uses indigenous themes in an instrumental way, see Madrid forthcoming 2012; Htun and Ossa 2010), the MAS has significant indigenous leadership and participation.<sup>24</sup>

The interaction of the MAS's rise and the national gender quota law has brought more indigenous women into political office. The MAS included some indigenous women on party lists to comply with the electoral law (which, prior to the adoption of gender parity in 2009, required that 30 percent of candidates be women). In the 2005 elections, six indigenous women were elected to the lower

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<sup>22</sup> Bolivia's lower house of Congress has 130 seats, around 70 of which are elected from single-member districts and some 60 from party lists in multimember districts. The 36-seat senate is elected from party lists in multi-member districts. In both cases, electoral districts correspond to departments (sub-national administrative units).

<sup>23</sup> Author inference from examination of pictures in congressional website. [http://www.diputados.bo/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=117](http://www.diputados.bo/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=117). Date accessed: July 14, 2011.

<sup>24</sup> The seats were created in response to demands by indigenous movements for a mechanism of political inclusion independent of mainstream political parties. Yet the MAS agreed to very few seats (seven of 150 or five percent of the total) (Htun and Ossa 2010).

house of Congress, compared to fifty indigenous men and 16 white/*mestizo* women. Overall, indigenous people made up 43 percent of Congress and women, 17 percent (Inter-American Development Bank 2007; Htun and Ossa 2010).<sup>25</sup>

In the 2009 elections, significantly more women were elected to the lower house and to the Senate due to the transformation of the gender quota into a parity law and stricter interpretation and enforcement. By 2010, women made up 23 percent of the lower house and a whopping 47 percent of the Senate. This included at least six indigenous women (but likely more), all of whom were from the MAS.<sup>26</sup>

By the same classification criteria, at least thirty-one of *suplentes* (alternates) in the Bolivian congress are indigenous women. Except for one PPB *suplente* for the reserved seat in Pando, all of the female *suplentes* I counted were from the MAS.<sup>27</sup> The combination of a national gender parity law and a mechanism for ethnic representation—in Bolivia’s case, the rise of an indigenous-led party—has brought in a tremendous number of minority women as *suplentes*.

Does Bolivia’s experience suggest any routes to power for Afrodescendant women? There are some key differences. First, the primary vehicle for the expansion of indigenous inclusion has been the MAS. The electoral success of the MAS has brought more indigenous people—and indigenous women—into power. Yet it is

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<sup>25</sup> Indigenous women are counted as part of the indigenous group and the group of women.

<sup>26</sup> In legislator photos on the congressional website, at least six women were visibly indigenous. (They were wearing hats.) More may identify as indigenous but I did not have access to this information. Repeated requests made by I and my research assistant to the congressional committee on indigenous issues for a count and list of indigenous deputies failed to receive a response. Since many indigenous peoples, including those from the lowland regions, do not wear hats, these numbers almost certainly underestimate the total.

<sup>27</sup> The number is based on the author’s count of legislators wearing hats, legislators elected from reserved indigenous seats, and one legislator who was not wearing a hat but whom the author personally interviewed in 2005 and knows to self-identify as indigenous. See footnote 26 for an explanation of why this number almost certainly underestimates the total.

unlikely that partisan realignment will bring Afrodescendants into power in a similar way. With the exception of the Brazilian Communist Party (PC do B, where 30 percent of federal deputies are black), there is no party in the region with a heavy Afrodescendant presence. Rather, Afrodescendants appear to be sprinkled among parties across the political spectrum.

What about reserved seats and other ethnic preference policies mentioned in the previous section? Only one Latin American country has a group-specific intervention targeted at Afrodescendants: Colombia. We turn now to an analysis of that country to see how reserved seats have fared there. I argue that Colombia's policies, though successful in calling attention to Afrodescendant rights, should not serve as a model for other countries.

## RESERVED SEATS FOR “COMUNIDADES NEGRAS” IN COLOMBIA

Colombia is the only country in Latin America with a group representation policy for Afrodescendants. The Constitution of 1991 included a temporary article obliging congress to pass a law recognizing the collective property rights of “black communities” (*comunidades negras*) in the rural Pacific who had been occupying vacant/unused land “in accordance with their traditional productive practices.” Applicable to other areas of the country “with similar conditions,” the article called for mechanisms to protect the rights and cultural identity of these communities and for the promotion of their social and economic development (Temporary article 55 of the Constitution of 1991). In 1993, the legislation implementing this provision (Law 70) allocated two seats in the lower house of Congress to “black communities” (Htun n.d.: 11).

As this suggests, the legislative reservation was not intended for the entire Afrodescendant population. Rather, the principal beneficiaries were the so-called *comunidades negras*, including Afro-Colombians living primarily in the Pacific and numbering approximately 540,000 people (Hoffmann 1998: 16) or some seven percent of the total black population.<sup>28</sup> In the process of implementing the

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<sup>28</sup> As Wade (2002) notes, there are at least three subgroups of Afrodescendants in Colombia. The first, largest group lives in urban areas and participates in the majority culture. They tend to be concentrated along the Caribbean coast, particularly in Cartagena, in the upper-central Cauca valley around the city of Cali, and in other major cities such as Bogotá and Medellín (Wade 2002: 6-7). Second are the “raizales” or residents of the Caribbean islands of San Andres and Providencia. Raizales speak creole or patois instead of (or in addition to) Spanish, they tend to be Baptist, and consider themselves to be culturally distinct from the mainstream culture. The third group is composed of members of the *comunidades negras* defined by the 1991 Constitution and Law 70 of 1993 (Wade 2002). Living primarily in rural areas of the Pacific region, they were estimated to comprise some half a million people in the late-1990s (Hoffmann 1998).

constitutional article, however, the national congress implied that these ethnic rights would apply to the entire Afro-Colombian population (Reyes 2007: 113).

This frame of “ethnic” difference (as opposed to racial discrimination) cast black rights as applying to bounded communities maintaining traditional productive practices (Wade 2002: 7-8). Yet the vast majority of Afro-Colombians do not see themselves as a distinct ethnic group. They are heterogeneous, spread throughout the country, tend to live in urban areas, and participate in the majority culture (Giraldo and López 2007: 109). This is why, in the 1993 census, a mere 1.5 percent of respondents identified as “Afro-Colombian,” fewer than those that identified as indigenous (Htun n.d.: 35). Even the government statistical agency concluded in an official document that “many blacks don’t consider themselves an ethnic group” (Barbary and Urrea 2004: 59). In the 2006 census, the wording of questions about race and ethnicity changed to refer to physical traits and culture and included the categories “Negro, mulato, afro-colombiano or afrodescendiente.” As a result of this more expansive terminology, some 11 percent of the population identified as black (Del Popolo et al. 2009).

Unlike ethnic reservations in other countries, which tend to segregate voters in separate districts or voter rolls, the Colombian system creates a “virtual” national district in which anyone can vote, regardless of race, but in which only candidates sponsored by a black community organization can run. The law requires that candidates for the seats “be members of such a community and previously sponsored by an organization registered with the Directorate for Black Community Issues in the Interior Ministry” (República de Colombia 2001). In practice this is

incredibly permissive: over 1,000 such organizations are registered and there is little monitoring of their activities or the constituencies they claim to represent (Htun n.d.: 24). Unlike in Bolivia, “regular” political parties may not postulate candidates for these seats.

The other 162 candidates for the Chamber of Representatives compete in one of the 32 provinces, each of which comprises a multi-member district electing deputies on the basis of population size (with a minimum of two). The black community candidates, however, compete nationwide, appearing on every ballot in each of the provinces. The discrepancy between the territorial basis of representation of the lower house and the national constituency of the Afrodescendent representatives will be discussed more below.

In the 1994 elections (the first held under the new provision), 12 candidates contested the black seats. Zulia Mena, a leader from the Chocó with a national presence and a member of the commission that wrote Law 70, received over 39,000 votes, far more than any other candidate. Agustín Valencia, a professor from Cali with Chocoan roots and connections to civic movements, came in second place with almost 14,000 votes (Agudelo 2000: 120).

Subsequently, the legislative record of these deputies disappointed the black movements that had endorsed them. Rather than advocate ethnic rights, they fumbled from a lack of political experience and were contaminated by the scandal surrounding allegations that then-President Ernesto Samper had received campaign donations from drug traffickers. Much to the chagrin of supporters, both black

representatives joined the coalition defending Samper (Agudelo 2002: 184-5 and fn 34).

Meanwhile, the Constitutional Court ruled unconstitutional the part of Law 70 allocating two lower house seats to black communities. The Court was not against the reservations in principle but focused on procedural errors. Because the seats dealt with a constitutional matter, the law first needed to be submitted for approval to the Court before its application (Agudelo 2002: 185). As a result, there was no election for the black seats in 1998. They were later reinstated in 2002 when constitutional guarantees of lower house seats for indigenous peoples and Colombians living abroad were implemented.<sup>29</sup>

Table 4 shows the number of organizations and candidates that contested the black seats in national elections in 2002, 2006, and 2010. Table 5 lists the number of votes received by winning candidates and their lists, and the percentage of the vote received by winning lists relative to the total number of votes cast. Note that Colombia's electoral laws changed in 2003 to require that parties postulate a single list though allowed them to choose whether to open the list to preference voting or to close the list.

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<sup>29</sup> Loss of the two seats provoked little protest or concern. Neither the black movement nor "black communities" of the Chocó mobilized on behalf of their two representatives. This lack of connection between most black voters and black community "representatives" is evidenced by electoral data. In the 1994 elections, only 12 percent of Pacific votes (the Chocó and the coastal regions of Valle, Cauca, and Nariño provinces) were cast for the reserved seats. Even though the Chocó was the main area to benefit from Law 70, only 4,000 people voted for candidates contesting the special district (of a total of around 131,000 votes nationwide). In a pattern resembling support for indigenous candidates, most of the votes for "ethnic" politicians came from urban areas, including 32,000 from Bogotá (Agudelo 2000: 122). In the 2006 elections, the number of votes from black-dominated geographical zones cast in the black seats was also low. In the city of Cali, where some one-third of the population is estimated to be black, a mere two percent of voters cast votes for the reserved seats (Giraldo and López 2007: 11).

**Table 4. Colombian Organizations and Candidates Contesting “Black Community” Seats**

ELECTION YEAR	NUMBER OF PARTIES/ORGANIZATIONS	NUMBER OF CANDIDATES	TOTAL VOTES CAST
2002	n.a.	23	210,572
2006	23	69	136,012 (84,569 valid)
2010	67	169	512,907 (391,180 valid)

Source: National Civil Registry; Afrocolombianosvisibles 2010.<sup>30</sup>

**Table 5. Electoral Results for “Black Community” Seats in Colombia**

WINNING CANDIDATE	PARTY	NUMBER OF VOTES CAST FOR PERSON	NUMBER OF VOTES CAST FOR PARTY LIST (POST 2006)	PARTY VOTE AS % OF VOTES CAST (POST 2006)
<i>2002 Elections</i>				
María Isabel Urrutia	Popular Movement United (MPU)	40,968		
Willington Ortiz	Not available	30,926		
<i>2006 Elections</i>				
María Isabel Urrutia	Afro-Colombian Social Alliance	n/a (closed list)	7,751	6%
Silfredo Morales Altamar	Afrounincca	3,108	6,849	5%
<i>2010 Elections</i>				
Yahir Acuña	Afrovides	n/a (closed list)	45,775	n.a.
Heriberto Arrechea	Popular Movement United (MPU)	7,999	26,679	n.a.

Source: National Civil Registry for 2002 and 2006; Misión de Observación Electoral 2010 for 2010. Before 2006, it was not possible to vote for a party list.

In 2002, 23 candidates contested the black seats, including the two deputies elected in 1994. The total votes cast for the seats rose dramatically from 1994 (to 210,000) but the incumbents fared poorly: each received a mere six percent of the

<sup>30</sup> When this paper was prepared, aggregated data for the 2010 elections were not yet available on the website of the National Civil Registry.

vote. The victors were two star athletes: María Isabel Urrutia, who had won a gold medal in weightlifting at the Sydney Olympics in 2000 (the only one ever earned by Colombia) and Willington Ortiz, champion soccer player of the 1970s. Similar to the 1994 elections, most of the votes for the victorious candidates did not come from those areas of the country benefiting from Law 70.<sup>31</sup> Over half of Willington's votes came from Bogotá and one-third of María Isabel's from the Valle province, areas where both legislators realized their athletic careers. Neither deputy had connections to the Afro-Colombian movement (Cunin 2003; Reyes 2007).

Yet the two deputies elected in 2002 attempted to champion black rights. They pushed the president to include, within the National Development Plan, a sub plan on the development of black communities. Deputy Ortiz presented a bill to congress to create a quota for blacks in decision making positions in the executive branch and worked so that Afrodescendent university students have access to a public fund for scholarships. The quota proposal encountered tremendous resistance in committee, however, with other deputies offering the familiar argument that the quota would lead to a cascade of demands from other groups.<sup>32</sup>

For her part, María Isabel Urrutia was committed to exposing and fighting racism. In an interview, she argued that racism is pervasive but hidden:

they discriminate against us but in an underground way...so they say there is no racism. But there is racism!...We can't say we are denied entrance to different places, but they look at you and they follow you as if you are going to rob something. The guards are watching you because you are black. This happens to me a lot. You get to the exit

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<sup>31</sup> María Isabel Urrutia received only 421 votes in the Chocó, and Willington Ortiz, 31.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Deputy Willington Ortiz, Bogotá, June 23, 2004.

and they want to look through your bag. This happens to many blacks.<sup>33</sup>

When I asked her what stood in the way of affirmative action in Colombia, she responded: “For blacks to admit we are blacks! And for us to accept that there is race discrimination and that we have to unite in the struggle for power.”<sup>34</sup>

In the 2006 elections, 27 party lists contested the race for the two seats, including some 57 candidates. Nine parties opted for open lists and 18 for closed lists. Only a few hundred votes separated the top lists. As Table 4 shows, the winning lists received some six and five percent of the vote, respectively. (By contrast, the winning list for the 2006 national Senate elections gained 17 percent of the national vote.) Three other lists garnered around four percent of the vote. María Isabel Urrutia won re-election, though due to the greater competition, her party received only 7,751 votes. The party of 2002 deputy Willington Ortiz received 5,542 votes (some four percent of the total) and came in fourth place.

The groups contesting the seats included the Organization of Afro-Colombian Women (which postulated two male candidates and came in eighth place with a total of 4,489 votes), the Yoruba Drum Foundation (2,860 votes), and Afro-Colombian Malcom X Corporation (three candidates and a total of 1,763 votes), and Coagropacifico Limited, among others. Notwithstanding the quantity of lists, almost none presented a coherent party platform (Reyes 2007: 140).

In 2010, a record 169 candidates and 67 organizations contested the reserved seats and a total of 512,907 votes were cast, including 121,727 spoiled

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<sup>33</sup> Interview, Bogotá, June 15, 2004.

<sup>34</sup> Interview, Bogotá, June 15, 2004.

votes (some 24 percent of the total). The results of the elections were widely criticized due to alleged connections between the winning candidates and paramilitary forces. Top-vote getter Yahir Acuña's political patron had been identified by military intelligence as part of the political structure of paramilitaries in coastal regions. The deputy himself attracted attention for his meteoric rise: in five years he rose through the city council and the state assembly to be elected federal deputy (Misión de Observación Electoral 2010: 35). Heriberto Arrechea's party, the MPU, is an appendage of the National Democratic Alliance (ADN) party from Cali and the deputy said in an interview that he "could not deny" his connection to an ex-senator under investigation for his ties to paramilitary groups.<sup>35</sup>

Though various observers believed that the election of these two deputies undermined the legitimacy of the reserved seats, it is important to bear in mind that numerous Colombian politicians were removed from office and jailed in the late 2000s for paramilitary ties. Problems with the black community deputies merely reflected flaws in the political system as a whole.

How have the seats fared with minority women? Of the seven deputies elected in the seats between 1994 and 2010, two have been women (Zulia Mena and María Isabel Urrutia, who was elected twice). This suggests that women's chances of gaining access to the seats are actually rather good: they have won 38 percent of seats in dispute between 1994 and 2010. Fewer black women were elected outside of the reserved seats: only one in 2002 and none in 2010.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> [http://www.terra.com.co/elecciones\\_2010/votebien/html/vbn376-afrofranquicias.htm](http://www.terra.com.co/elecciones_2010/votebien/html/vbn376-afrofranquicias.htm). Date accessed: July 6, 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Data for 2006 were not available.

Yet Colombia's reserved seats must be evaluated according to other criteria as well. The experience presents several problems. First, though the seats were intended to represent the interests of *comunidades negras*—a mandate Congress ambiguously and problematically extended to the entire Afro-Colombian population—the constituency that actually elects them is national and self-defining. Candidates appear on every ballot nationwide and any voter may cast a vote for them. Other seats in the Chamber of deputies, by contrast, are elected by territorial constituencies and intended to represent interests circumscribed by geography.

Second, if the seats are intended for all Afro-Colombians and not just *comunidades negras*, their number (2) is not proportional to their size. According to the 2006 census, blacks make up some 11 percent of the national population. This implies that they should have around 11 seats in the senate and/or 18 seats in the lower house.

Third, requirements for organizations to postulate a list and candidates for the seats are lax and different from those applying to the regular races. As mentioned earlier, to contest a seat, an organization need only be registered with the Interior Ministry. This creates a double standard, since parties contesting the national seats must complete certain requirements established by the National Electoral Council (Giraldo and López 2007: 14). Groups contesting the black seats, by contrast, are not required to demonstrate any capacity for representation or popular support (such as signatures on a petition).

Finally, there is a massive disproportionality between votes received and seat allocations in the black community district. In 2006, lists receiving five and six

percent of the total vote each received one seat. This suggests that some 90 percent of the votes cast in the district were for losing candidates.

Giraldo and López (2007:10) propose that the black community seats be moved to the Senate: “It is the ideal institution for the representation of national interests, be they of the majority or a minority. By contrast, the Chamber of Representatives is intended to support the work of congress by channeling regional interests, projects, and perspectives.” Afro-Colombians are dispersed throughout the entire country, and not located in just one or two regions, which makes it impossible to conceive of their interests in merely geographic or regional terms (Giraldo and López 2007: 10). They also propose that the country contemplate mechanisms—including region-specific quotas— to improve the representation of Afrodescendant interests in those states of the country where they constitute a majority, such as Chocó (85%), Magdalena (72%), and Bolívar (66%).

Though one might think that black-majority regions would elect politicians advocating the rights of Afrodescendants, this has almost never been the case. Politics in states with large Afrodescendant populations tends to be dominated by party machines and patron-client relations. Elected representatives from Chocó, for example—even the ones who are black—have never advocated ethnic rights. And representatives in the “black community” seats have received very few votes from the Chocó (Agudelo 2000; Giraldo and López 2007: 13).

Finally, Giraldo and López argue for the introduction of stricter requirements for the groups contesting the reserved seats with the objective of increasing their legitimacy and capacity to represent the Afro-Colombian population (Giraldo and

López 2007: 14). They should be subject to vetting by the National Electoral Council, though the threshold for representation should be lower than for other parties (Giraldo and López 2007: 15).

Other countries contemplating mechanisms to promote Afrodescendant inclusion should study the Colombian experience and learn from its mistakes. However, there may be no magic solution. As the following section argues, there are advantages and disadvantages to most electoral interventions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

What policy interventions can promote the political inclusion of Afrodescendant women in Latin America? The region has already made huge strides to promote women's inclusion. As mentioned earlier, thirteen of 19 Latin American countries apply national gender quota laws (though Uruguay's will not be applied for the first time until 2014). Though results vary depending on the nature of the electoral system, the details of the law, and enforcement mechanisms (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2009), the widespread embrace of quotas in Latin America suggests that elites and voters in the region are generally not opposed to including more women in national politics. On their own, these quota laws will improve Afrodescendant women's political representation, but only gradually.

The racial dimensions of exclusion are arguably more difficult to challenge. Even though few Latin Americans defend discriminatory practices, racism is pervasive. What's more, the collective mobilization of Afrodescendants for greater rights and recognition is relatively recent: even Brazil has never experienced race-based mobilization on the scale of the U.S. civil rights or the South African anti-apartheid movement. Consciousness of racial categories and identities is low (though this is changing in some countries such as Brazil and Colombia) and little data—and much disagreement—exists about the nature of those groups to whom the rights would be granted. Finally, the one country that allocates legislative seats by race—Colombia—does not present a model of best practices.

This paper proposes recommendations for the inclusion of Afrodescendants as a group (both men and women). I argue that racial inclusion policies, applied in

the context of already-existing gender quotas, are the most effective way to improve the political presence of Afrodescendant women.<sup>37</sup> This would create a situation of tandem quotas, identified by Hughes (2011) as the policy combination most likely to lead to the election of minority women.

What kind of racial inclusion policy should Latin American countries adopt? At the outset, we should rule out election from special districts or reserved seats. As mentioned before, these mechanisms are most appropriate for “classical” ethnic groups that form group-specific parties or concentrate in one or two parties (Moser and Holmsten n.d.; Htun 2004). Latin America’s Afrodescendants, however, tend not to form group-specific parties and, with the partial exception of the Brazilian Communist Party (PC do B), do not cluster in parties on one end of the political spectrum. Instead, they seem to participate in all parties. This tendency of Afrodescendants to cross cut partisan divisions implies that we should consider different categories of interventions to promote their inclusion including candidate quotas by race, legislative allocation, and electoral reform.

### ***Candidate quotas by race***

A national law could require that parties postulate a minimum number of Afrodescendant candidates. Colombia, for example, could require that ten percent of candidates on national party lists for the Senate be Afrodescendant. For the Chamber of Deputies, the percentages could be fixed nationally or they could vary

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<sup>37</sup> National gender quota laws exist in most democracies with significant numbers of Afrodescendants, including Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Panama.

by province. Provinces with greater Afrodescendant populations could have higher quota percentages than others.

The combination of a women's quota and an Afrodescendant quota would be sure to benefit black women. Including them on party lists would allow parties to comply with both quotas simultaneously. The candidate quota has the additional advantage of permitting black candidates to compete in parties of their choice and to contest the elections alongside other candidates. It is likely to be perceived as fair.

The problem with candidate quotas is the potential for a large gap between percentage targets and the number of minorities actually elected. As has been demonstrated in the case of women, the effectiveness of quotas depends on the details of the law and on the type of electoral rules (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2009; Matland 2006). Quotas work best in closed-list PR systems with placement mandates. Yet electoral laws in Brazil and Colombia<sup>38</sup>—two of the countries with the largest Afrodescendant population in the region—are open-list PR systems. Candidates gain seats according to the preference votes they receive, not their placement on the party list.

In these systems, the nomination of candidates by parties offers no guarantee of their actual election. Winning a seat tends to depend on the candidate's personal reputation and resources, not on collective party efforts (Ames 2002; Carey and Shugart 1995). A candidate quota in an open-list system is therefore more of a symbolic gesture at inclusion than a serious intervention to promote political presence.

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<sup>38</sup> Colombian law actually allows parties to choose between open or closed lists. The vast majority opt for open-lists.

This is why candidate quotas have not succeeded in significantly increasing women’s presence in the Brazilian congress.<sup>39</sup> After their adoption in 1996, the number of women has crept up a few percentage points (see Table 6), hardly the dramatic jumps seen in countries with closed-list PR such as Argentina and Costa Rica. In spite of the quota law, women’s presence in the Chamber of Deputies is relatively low for the region.

**Table 6. Women Elected to the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, 1994-2010**

ELECTION YEAR	NUMBER OF WOMEN ELECTED	PERCENT OF TOTAL
1994	32	6%
1998	29	6%
2004	44	9%
2006	45	9%
2010	44	9%

Source: Parline Database. Date accessed: July 17, 2011.

The effect on Afrodescendant candidates is likely to be similar. Though they will be included on party lists, there is no chance that they will get elected unless they acquire significant personal reputations and resources.

### ***Legislative allocation***

National law could allocate a fixed percentage of legislative seats to people self-identifying as Afrodescendants. These seats could then be filled by those Afrodescendant candidates gaining the most votes in national elections.

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<sup>39</sup> Brazil’s quota law had other flaws as well. National law permitted political parties to nominate 50 percent more candidates than seats in dispute. Whereas parties had to *reserve* 30 percent of these slots for women, they did not actually have to fill them with female candidates. As a result, a party could postulate ten male candidates for a ten-seat district (*reserving*—but not *filling*—five slots for women) and still comply with the law (Htun 2001: 16). This loophole was closed in 2009 in time for the 2010 elections but numbers of women stayed the same (44 elected to the lower house in 2010 compared to 45 in 2006). This suggests that the electoral system is more of a problem than the details of the law. For more discussion, see Dos Santos (2011).

This scheme would be broadly similar to what holds for women in Afghanistan. As mentioned earlier, laws there set aside 27 percent of parliamentary seats for women. Female candidates contest elections alongside men and the seats are filled by those women with the highest vote totals.

Another example is Burundi, where the Constitution allocates 60 percent of congressional seats to the Hutu majority and 40 percent to the Tutsi, Twa, and other minority groups. After the election is completed, the ratio of the winning legislature is evaluated and candidates are brought in until the 60/40 ratio is achieved.

Afrodescendant quotas in dozens of Brazilian universities allocate entrance slots in a manner similar to what could be done in the legislature. The policy fixes a certain percentage of the entering class that must be Afrodescendant (the target varies by university). These slots are filled with black students with the highest test scores. The remaining positions are given to non-Afrodescendant students according to their scores. Some universities also apply quotas for graduates of public schools.

The advantage of this scheme is that it guarantees that the quota percentage will be met in any type of electoral system. There will be no gap between the quota percentage and the actual composition of the legislature. In addition, it permits Afrodescendant candidates to compete in parties of their choice. Finally, if the legislative allocation by race is combined with a national gender candidate quota law, parties will be compelled to postulate and support black women candidates. By doing so, they would comply with the law while simultaneously maximizing their chances for the black seats.

Yet there are some problems. First, it may be perceived as unfair. Congressional seats will end up being occupied by candidates who receive fewer votes than other candidates. If candidate A is white and gets 60,000 votes, she may be denied a seat while candidate B, who received only 30,000 votes but who is black, wins a seat since his presence is needed to meet the target.

Second, it may create perverse incentives for political parties. In order to occupy the “black seats,” parties with no interest in Afrodescendant rights may postulate black candidates for election, knowing that they will stand a chance of winning even if they receive very few votes. Given the dominance of patronage politics in regions populated by Afrodescendants in Colombia as well as the Northeast of Brazil, it is possible that the legislative allocation would primarily benefit parties with no history of representing Afrodescendant interests.

### ***Electoral reform***

Finally, countries could consider more general electoral reforms to facilitate the election of women and minorities. According to conventional wisdom, both groups do better under proportional representation (PR) than under majoritarian or plurality electoral formulas. Worldwide data reveals that women’s share of parliamentary seats is several points higher under PR than under mixed systems, with majoritarian systems lagging even farther behind (Norris 2004). In addition, analysis of mixed systems (in which part of the chamber is elected from single-member district and part from PR lists) shows that women get elected in greater numbers from PR lists (Vengroff, Creevey, and Krisch 2000). For their part, ethnic

minorities can gain access to office under PR either by forming their own parties—which a low-threshold PR would encourage—or through inclusion as individuals on party lists (Moser 2008).<sup>40</sup>

Yet as Robert Moser and Stephanie Holmsten point out, the election of women and minorities can work at cross purposes. Women gain office in systems that offer incentives to parties to balance their tickets by including diverse candidates whereas ethnic minorities tend to get elected from smaller parties where they make up the majority of candidates (Moser and Holmsten n.d.). Whereas women benefit from party systems with depth (where more candidates from the lists of each party are elected), ethnic minorities benefit from party system breadth (where a greater diversity of parties win office) (Moser and Holmsten n.d.).

Yet in Latin America, the election of women and ethnic minorities—at least Afrodescendants—need not be at cross purposes. As argued earlier, Afrodescendants do not concentrate in specific parties, with some exceptions, and seem to be supported by diverse groups of voters. As a result, they would also benefit from conditions that compel parties to balance their tickets and conditions that facilitate the election of many candidates from each party.<sup>41</sup>

What are these conditions that compel parties to balance their tickets by including a diverse mix of candidates and that facilitate the election of diverse candidates from a party's list? Unfortunately, a paradoxical combination of factors is

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<sup>40</sup> Geographically-concentrated ethnic minorities may also gain access to office under single-member district (SMD) systems (Moser 2008).

<sup>41</sup> Moser points out that assimilated ethnic minorities may also benefit from single-member district (SMD) elections (2008). However, a move toward an SMD system would almost certainly be more prejudicial to women's representation than PR.

required to meet both criteria: large district size and fewer parties. Under these two conditions, party magnitude—the number of seats each party wins in a district—is likely to be high. As a result, a greater number of candidates—including women and Afrodescendants—will be elected from each party.

The conditions are paradoxical because large districts tend to encourage the formation and success of many parties while small districts produce fewer parties. Apart from district size, what other conditions can reduce the number of parties? Studies show that these include majority and plurality electoral formulas; higher PR thresholds; coordination between local and national party systems; a smaller upper house; and concurrent presidential elections that are not too fractionalized; among other factors.<sup>42</sup>

Notwithstanding the incentives for party balancing, an electoral system that reduces the number of parties may squeeze out those small parties that tend to elect high numbers of Afrodescendants, such as the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B). To compensate, a country could grant exemptions to PR thresholds for parties nominating a certain percentage of Afrodescendant candidates, among other possible mechanisms.

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<sup>42</sup> The literature on the effects of electoral rules is too extensive to cite here. See, e.g. Duverger 1963; Powell 2000; Taagepera and Shugart 1989; Cox 1997; Neto and Cox 1997; Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994; Carey and Shugart 1995; Mainwaring and Shugart 1997; Carey and Hix 2011.

## CONCLUSION

The good news is that the challenges faced by Afrodescendant women—in society, economy, and the polity— are receiving more attention than in the past. Fresh attempts at data collection by national governments and international organizations allow us to compile evidence of exclusion and discrimination. The mobilization of black women’s movements in multiple countries has compelled the broader public to recognize their specificity as a social group as well as the legitimacy of their particular perspectives. As far as political inclusion is concerned, it is also good news that the vast majority of Latin American countries have adopted gender quota laws to pull more women into political office.

The bad news is that official interventions to combat racial exclusion and discrimination are incipient (if not nonexistent) and plagued by controversies and conceptual problems. It is difficult to design, let alone apply and enforce, policies and rights to a social group if the alleged members of that group are unwilling to identify as such and when considerable disagreement persists over whether the category is legitimate. Efforts to introduce racial perspectives and politics into Latin America—even on the part of citizens from the region—are often met with charges of cultural imperialism and the imposition of foreign categories (see, e.g. Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999; Fry 2000).

Promoting the political inclusion of Afrodescendant women requires addressing the problem of racial underrepresentation. The combination of national gender quota laws—already in place in most Latin American countries—and mechanisms targeted specifically to Afrodescendants will specifically benefit black

women. Tandem quotas will compel parties and elites to bring more black women into elected office since by doing so, they satisfy both types of quotas.

Yet without any official data on the race and ethnic identity (or identification) of legislators, it is difficult to design an intervention. As argued above, different solutions for political exclusion are logically appropriate for differently situated groups. Unless we know some broad characteristics of the group—such as whether it cross cuts or coincides with partisan divisions and whether or not it is geographically concentrated—we cannot formulate a good policy. Bringing more women into power requires that we assemble more information on the trajectories, presence, and activities of Afrodescendants in elected office and in political parties.

**Appendix A  
Gender Quotas and Reservations<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Policy</b>
<b>National and Local Levels</b>	
Afghanistan	At least 27% of seats reserved in lower house; at least 17% in upper house
Argentina	30% of party candidates
Armenia	15% of party candidates for PR elections
Bangladesh	45 of 345 (13%) seats reserved for women in unicameral parliament; some seats reserved at local level
Belgium	50% of party candidates
Bolivia	50% of party candidates
Bosnia and Herzegovina	33% of party candidates
Brazil	30% of party candidates
Burundi	25% of party candidates (constitution states that women must occupy 30% of all governmental positions)
Colombia	30% of senior executive appointments 30% of party candidates
Costa Rica	40% of candidates
Djibouti	7 of 65 (10%) of parliamentary seats reserved
Dominican Republic	33% of party candidates
Ecuador	45% of party candidates
Eritrea	30% of seats reserved
France	50% of party candidates
Guyana	33% of party candidates
Honduras	30% of party candidates
Indonesia	30% of party candidates
Iraq	33% of party candidates
Jordan	6 of 110 seats (5%) reserved in House of Representatives
Kosovo <sup>b</sup>	33% of party candidates
Liberia	30% of party candidates
Macedonia	33% of party candidates
Mauritania	50% of party candidates <sup>c</sup>
Mexico	30% of party candidates
Morocco	30 of 325 parliamentary seats reserved <sup>d</sup>
Nepal	33% of party candidates for FPTP elections; 50% of candidates for PR elections; 40% of candidates for local elections

Niger	Parties are required to allocate 10% of their elected positions to women
North Korea	20% of 687 parliamentary seats reserved
Pakistan	60 of 342 (18%) of seats reserved in national assembly and 4% of seats in the Senate; 18% in provincial assemblies; 33% in local assemblies
Palestinian Authority <sup>b</sup>	Around 20% of party candidates in PR elections; 2 seats reserved on each municipal council
Panama	30% of candidates in party primary elections for unicameral parliament
Paraguay	20% of party candidates
Peru	30% of party candidates
Portugal	33% of party candidates
Rwanda	24 of 80 (30%) seats reserved in Chamber of Deputies; 30% of 26-member senate
Serbia	30% of national and local party candidates
Slovenia	25% of party candidates for national assembly (to increase to 35%); 20% of candidates at local level (to increase to 40%)
Somalia	12% of seats reserved in transitional federal parliament (according to 2004 transitional federal charter)
South Korea	50% of party candidates in PR elections (that apply to 56 of 299 national seats)
Spain	40% of party candidates
Sudan	35 of 360 national assembly seats reserved
Taiwan	10-25% of seats reserved in Legislative Yuan; 25% at local level
Tanzania	20-30% of parliamentary seats reserved; 25% of local councils
Uganda	61 of 295 (22%) of parliamentary seats reserved; 33% seats reserved in local councils
Uruguay	33% of party candidates for lower house and senate (to be applied only in 2014)
Uzbekistan	30% of party candidates for lower house

<sup>a</sup> Kenya and Philippines are excluded from these tables due to the extremely small number of reserved seats (3 and 1 percent, respectively). Kyrgyzstan, which used legislative quotas once (in 2007) to fill 15 seats after a reform expanded the size of parliament, is also excluded.

<sup>b</sup> Kosovo and the Palestinian Authority, polities but not countries, are included in these appendices for informational purposes.

<sup>c</sup> Mauritania's law stipulates the number of women female candidates (and their list placement) according to the magnitude of the district. In most cases, this amounts to

50 percent.

<sup>d</sup> These reservations were instituted through a pact signed by all political parties in 2002.

<b>Local Level Only</b>	
Greece	33% of candidates
India	33% of seats reserved
Namibia	30% of candidates

Sources: Quotaproject; Jones 2009.

**Appendix B**  
**Ethnic Reservations**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Policy</b>
Afghanistan	10 of 249 seats reserved for Kuchis (4%)
Belgium	49 seats for Flemish, 29 for French, and 1 for German-speakers in Senate (100% reserved); half of cabinet ministries reserved for French speakers and half for Dutch speakers; lower house of parliament divides into French and Dutch cultural councils when dealing with regional and cultural issues.
Bhutan	10 of 150 seats reserved for representatives of Buddhist groups (nominated) (7%)
Bolivia	7 of 130 seats reserved in lower house for originary peoples (5%)
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3 member presidency (Bosniak, Croat, Serb); in 42-member National House of Representatives, 28 seats are allocated to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 14 seats to the Republika Srpska; the 15-member House of Peoples consists of 5 Bosniaks, 5 Croats, and 5 Serbs
Burundi	60% of seats reserved for Tutsis, 40% for Hutus, and 3 for Twa of a total of 100 lower house seats; Senate of 49 is divided equally between Hutus and Tutsis <sup>a</sup>
Colombia	2 seats reserved for “black communities” and 1 for indigenous peoples of 166 (2%) in lower house; 2 of 102 seats reserved for indigenous peoples in Senate (2%)
Croatia	5 of 153 seats in unicameral assembly reserved for ethnic minorities (3%) (an additional 6 seats reserved for Croatian diaspora)
Cyprus	24 seats reserved for Turks (unfilled) and 1 seat each for Maronite, Roman-Catholic and Goumenian minorities of 80 in national assembly (34%)
Ethiopia	22 of 117 upper house seats (Council of the Federation) reserved for representatives of minority nationalities (19%)
Fiji	23 and 19 of 71 seats reserved for Fijians and Indo-Fijians, respectively
India	79 seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and 41 for Scheduled Tribes of 543 in the Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament); Prime Minister has the right to appoint up to 2 Anglo-Indians to the same chamber (22%)
Iran	5 of 290 seats reserved for Zoroastrians, Jews, and Christians (2%)
Jordan	9 seats for Christians, 6 for Bedouins, and 3 for Circassians of 110 (22%)
Kiribati	1 of 41 seats for Banabans (2%)
Kosovo <sup>b</sup>	20 of 120 seats reserved for minorities (17%)
Lebanon	Of 128 national assembly seats: Maronites (34), Sunnis (27), Shiites (27), Greek Orthodox (14), Greek Catholics (8), Druzes (8), Armenian Orthodox (5), Alaouites (2), Armenian Catholics (1), Protestants (1), Christian Minorities (1) (100% reserved)

Mauritius	8 of 70 seats are filled by the “best losers” representing the four constitutionally-recognized ethnic communities (Hindus, Muslims, Chinese, and Franco-Mauritian/Creole Christians)
Montenegro	5 of 81 seats reserved for Albanians (6%)
New Zealand	7 of 120 seats reserved for Maoris in unicameral parliament (6%)
Niger	8 of 83 seats reserved for Tuaregs in unicameral parliament (10%)
Pakistan	10 of 342 lower house seats reserved for non-Muslims (3%)
Palestinian Authority <sup>b</sup>	6 seats for Christians and 1 for Samaritans of 88 (8%)
Peru	15% of candidates in 11 (of 25) regions must be members of “native communities”
Romania	19 of 343 seats reserved for small minorities (6%)
Samoa	2 of 49 seats in unicameral assembly (Fono) reserved for part- or non-Samoans (4%)
Singapore	Parties and alliances contesting the 14 multi-member Group Representation Constituencies must include an ethnic minority candidate on the ticket; the policy guarantees that 9 seats will be occupied by Malays and 5 by Indians or other minorities out of a total of 93 in parliament
Slovenia	2 seats of 90 in unicameral assembly reserved for Hungarians and Italians (2%)
Switzerland	4 seats for German speakers, 2 for French speakers, and one for Italian-speakers in 7-member Federal Cabinet
Taiwan	8 seats reserved for aboriginal groups in 225-seat Legislative Yuan (4%) (an additional 8 seats are reserved for overseas Chinese)
Venezuela	3 of 165 seats in unicameral national assembly reserved for indigenous peoples (2%)

<sup>a</sup> Burundi’s constitutional ethnic reservations are applied through quotas on party lists: there may be no more than two candidates from a single ethnic group for every three candidates on the list (article 168 of the Constitution of Burundi)

<sup>b</sup> Kosovo and the Palestinian Authority, polities but not countries, are included in these appendices for informational purposes but not in Tables 1, 2, or 3.

Sources: Reynolds 2005; Parline database; CIA World Factbook; Htun 2004.

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