Hillary Clinton took money from the kings of four countries, GOP chief
Reince Priebus says

For probably as long as Democrats anticipated Hillary Clinton announcing for president, Republicans anticipated attacking her.

On April 12, 2015, the day Clinton’s run became official, Republican National Committee chairman Reince Priebus disparaged her on CBS’ "Face the Nation."

The former chairman of the Wisconsin GOP appeared on the program after U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., who declared for president several days before Clinton did. Paul told host Bob Schieffer that Clinton will have a problem with women voters because "she has taken money from countries that abuse the rights of women," and he referred to Saudi Arabia.

Schieffer later noted that Saudi Arabia had given money to Clinton’s foundation, and then while interviewing Priebus, said Clinton couldn’t use that money personally. Schieffer added:

"But it also occurs to me, a lot of your candidates and the Democrats as well, are going to be taking campaign contributions that we are never going to know where they come from -- but now you can give these unbelievable amounts of money without any accounting of where the money comes from."

Priebus replied with a claim about kings and cash:

"But the difference is, all those other entities -- Super PACs, parties, individual candidates -- they can't take money from kings of Saudi Arabia and Morocco and Oman and Yemen, and that's what Hillary Clinton did. And so she's going to have to account for this money."

Priebus' statement goes beyond foreign government contributions to the Clinton Foundation, leaving the impression Clinton herself may have benefitted from money donated by the four countries -- including Yemen, which is the home of one of al-Qaida’s most active branches, and where the United States has conducted airstrikes since 2009.

Let's sort it all out.

Clinton Foundation

Not only Republicans are raising questions about whether the Clinton Foundation is taking millions of dollars a year from governments and other donors that want political influence. The Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, Politico and CBS News have run stories about the questions, with a Journal analysis noting that the number of governments contributing to the foundation in 2014 appeared to have doubled from the previous year.

Responding to Priebus’ claim, the foundation emailed us a statement saying: "Like other global charities, the Clinton Foundation receives support from individuals, organizations and governments from all over the world because the foundation's programs improve the lives of millions of people around the globe."

The charity, originally named the William J. Clinton Foundation, was launched in 2001 by former President Bill Clinton. Its aim is to partner with government and non-government organizations to tackle issues such as AIDS and poverty. The foundation has received millions of dollars from foreign governments, as PolitiFact National found in February 2015 when it rated that claim by a conservative group as True.
When Hillary Clinton became secretary of state in 2009, under President Barack Obama, the foundation agreed to disclose its donors at the request of the White House. When she left the Cabinet post, in February 2013, the foundation became the Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation, with Hillary Clinton taking an active role in fundraising.

Clinton resigned from the foundation’s board just before announcing her candidacy. And a few days later, the foundation announced it would modify its policies while she is a candidate for president, limiting which governments can give directly to the foundation.

An important note: Candidates for office are prohibited by law from accepting campaign contributions from foreign governments, but foundations have no such restriction.

Here’s what we know about the four countries cited by Priebus:

**Saudi Arabia**

The kingdom gave between $10 million and $25 million to the Clinton Foundation between the time the foundation was created through 2014, and some portion of the funds was contributed in 2014, according to the foundation’s searchable database.

(The database only reports ranges of the total amounts given and does not provide a breakdown by year, except that it notes which donors made a contribution in 2014.)

According to a February 2015 news article by the Washington Post, Saudi Arabia was among some foreign governments that had been supporting the foundation before Clinton was appointed secretary of state, did not give while she was in office and then resumed giving.

Saudi Arabia has long been regarded by the United States as a friend and a "strong partner in regional security and counterterrorism efforts," according to the State Department.

**Oman**

The Sultanate of Oman gave the foundation between $1 million and $5 million through 2014, including contributions given in 2014, according to the foundation database.

The U.S. and Oman have been parties to a military cooperation agreement since 1980. Oman "plays an important role in helping the United States realize its regional stability goals" in the Middle East, the State Department says.

**Morocco**

Four days before Clinton announced her run, Politico reported that the foundation was accepting at least $1 million from a Moroccan government-owned company to hold a high-profile conference in May 2015 in Marrakech with the king of Morocco.

The article noted that in 2011, Clinton’s State Department had accused the Moroccan government of "arbitrary arrests and corruption in all branches of government," but that when she announced the conference in September 2014, she praised Morocco as "a vital hub for economic and cultural exchange."

The U.S. regards Morocco as a "strong partner in counterterrorism efforts," according to the State Department.
Yemen

Neither the Post nor the Politico articles, which were cited to us by Priebus' office, reported any donations to the foundation from Yemen. And a spokesman for the foundation told us the country has never been a donor.

Yemen borders Saudi Arabia and Oman, but unlike those countries and Morocco, is not a monarchy. American drones have been conducting strikes in Yemen since 2009. On April 14, 2015, the al-Qaeda terrorist group announced that one of its top spokesmen for its branch in Yemen had been killed the previous day by an American drone strike.

Our rating

Priebus said Clinton took "money from kings of Saudi Arabia and Morocco and Oman and Yemen."

The monarchies of Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Oman have contributed to the Clinton Foundation, but Yemen, which does not have a king, has not.

And although Priebus' claim was made during a discussion of the foundation as well as contributions to political candidates, his phrasing could have left the impression that Clinton herself, rather than the foundation, received the money.

For a statement that is partially accurate, our rating is Half True.

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Published: Monday, April 20th, 2015 at 6:00 a.m.

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Email exchange, Republican National Committee spokeswoman Allison Moore, April 14, 2015

PolitiFact National, "Conservative group claims Hillary Clinton's foundation took millions from foreign governments," Feb. 26, 2015

Washington Post, "Foreign governments gave millions to foundation while Clinton was at State Department," Feb. 25, 2015

Politico, "Moroccan cash flows to Clinton Foundation," April 8, 2015


Email interview, Clinton Foundation Chief Communications Officer Craig Minassian, April 15, 2016

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