

# **Special Committee: Wakandan Crisis**

## ***Background Guide***



## **Vibranium Trade & Usage**

***Lincoln Model United Nations***

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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
History of the Committee.....	1
History of Wakanda.....	2
Current Trade & Policies.....	6
Possible Solutions.....	8
Question Res. Should Answer.....	9
Bloc Positions.....	10
Closing Remarks .....	12
Further Research.....	13
Bibliography.....	13

## **Letter from Committee**

### **Directors**

Dear Delegates,

I have the honor to welcome you to the Lincoln Model United Nations 2019. My name is Luciana Goñi, I am an 11th grade student at Lincoln School and it will be my pleasure to be your director for the Wakandan Crisis Committee. MUN has been a part of my life since 6th grade and I couldn't be more excited for this upcoming conference. I have attended several conferences in Costa Rica and also had the opportunity to attend Harvard Model United Nations in 2018. In each individual conference I have gained valuable insight on global issues and my passion for MUN has continued to grow. This year we elaborated a new crisis committee with the topic of Vibranium Trade and Usage, based on the movie Black Panther.

I have the pleasure to be working with Luis Eduardo Muñoz, your co-director of the committee. He also has an extensive experience with MUN and is a very talented delegate who has won several awards. Luis Eduardo, or, Lucho is a very committed person and he and I couldn't be more excited to be working with you. Lucho has also attended Harvard Model United Nations and has great insight on global issues as well.

We both look forward to your participation in this committee and conference. Lucho and I will make sure this committee is as professional and enjoyable as it can possibly be. We do, however, wish all delegates take this committee with all seriousness and hope to keep the flow of the debate and reach and pass a resolution.

Best of luck,

Luciana Goñi and Luis Eduardo Muñoz

## **Introduction**

The year is 2018 in the Kingdom of Wakanda. In the regime of the kingdom there has been a long-established policy of isolation from external conflicts. Such a kingdom depends almost solely on the exploitation and management of vibranium, which was developed from a meteorite, and has been the source of development for the Five African tribes for several years. Further research and testing in vibranium has led to great advances in technology, which for the most part have been hidden from the rest of

the world, and have made the country far more superior than what can be imagined.

There has been strict control as to how Wakanda exchanges or in other words shares such a valuable resource. Various individuals, including Ulysses Klaue, have participated in activities related to the illegal trafficking of vibranium. The government-controlled restrictive sale of vibranium has caused the surge of black markets that sell the metal for billions, which has in turn led to the creation of weapons such as the genocidal android Ultron. The problem arouses because some argue that restrictive control is necessary to prevent the appropriation of vibranium by other countries, while others disagree. Tensions have risen with the questioning of the current trade and isolation policies of the Kingdom. Individuals like N'Jadaka have challenged the country's management of its assets, arguing that it is not morally correct to keep the advanced technology away from populations in need around the world, especially African and African-descendant people in need of asylum.

## **History of the committee**

At a time of discord and debate in the Kingdom of Wakanda, a decision has to be made regarding the isolation policies the country has held for centuries. This committee aims to determine whether the nation and the world are ready for the revelation of Wakanda's reality.

The Wakandan Crisis Committee surged after the events of the Battle of Mount Bashenga, where the Border Tribe and the temporarily-proclaimed King Erik Killmonger faced the Jabari Tribe, T'Challa and the Dora Milaje. This was a battle that originated from the efforts by Killmonger to send Vibranium to operatives worldwide that would help African-descendants to come after their oppressors.

After the confrontation, the Crisis Committee was called upon by the Tribal Council, the Wakandan body composed by the King and the elders of the tribes, to discuss the issue of the opening of the country's borders to the rest of the world. The motion was led by King T'Challa after he was moved by the actions of Erik Killmonger (N'Jadaka).

Wakanda has long been a self-preserved nation, isolating itself and its natural and technological resources from the rest of the world. To the eyes of the general public, it is considered a third-world country within the African rainforests and deserts. However, it is secretly the most advanced technological nation due to its vast amount of Vibranium. Even if the country has prospered for centuries by itself, individuals like N'Jadaka have publicly challenged this long-held policy, gaining support of the Border Tribe, which later caused the confrontation in Mount Bashenga. This is due to the many African descent communities around the world that are suffering because of their oppressors and the desire to help these with Wakanda's resources. N'Jadaka's plan to help the communities, however, has also been questioned for its radical proposals that go as far as conquering other nations using Wakandan technology and weaponry.

Due to the positions and disagreements expressed by both sides of the issue, in the search for Wakanda's best interest, this committee has been formed to discuss whether it is time for the country to

reveal its technology to the world. Therefore, finding and passing a resolution that fits well for the different parties, considering the different scenarios in the cases of Wakanda keeping itself confined or sharing its assets.

## **History of Wakanda**

### **Roots of the Country (Tradition)**

The formation of the Kingdom of Wakanda dates to 2.5 million years ago, when an alien meteorite struck the Earth in the continent of Africa. Over the years, Five Tribes of men colonized the area around the meteorite and went to war over it. It is a small area around Lake Turkana, a point where Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia meet. Interestingly, this is the location of the Ilemi Triangle, an area of land contested between Kenya and South Sudan. Wakanda is a region of lush vegetation, situated in Central Africa, and bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is known to be an advanced African civilization, thriving in isolation, untouched by war or colonialism. Wakanda became an isolationist nation, posing as a third world country, in order to keep the

existence of vibranium a secret. Surrounding it there are mountain ranges and thick forests given it is a secret for the rest of the world. The source of vibranium has allowed it to be technologically advanced by decades in but in the eyes of the rest of the world, it is a third world country. The native tongue is Xhosa, which is more commonly known as a bantu language.

### **Wakandan Politics**

It is currently ruled by crowned King T'Challa and is a unique source of vibranium in the world. King T'Chaka, who used to rule before King T'Challa was very serious about the protection of his nation and in certain cases even instructed to kill mercenaries or fortune seekers that discovered the truth.

Democracies allow individuals from society to decide who they want to rule their country or nation. Often more than two parties rise to compete against each other and the citizens decide who deserves the job the best. Rather than threaten violence after losing an election, a political party can regroup and try again next time. Wakanda has yet to develop into a democracy where the Black Panther earns his title by winning

elections. One does not become the Black Panther after months of campaigning across the countryside or developing policy positions. The title is hereditary, however, if a citizen would like to become the next black panther, he or she must defeat the current one and fight six of Wakanda's greatest warriors all at once. The Black Panther is the head of state, making most of the governmental decisions. Although the Black Panther has an advisory council, the he largely rules on his own. As a result of living under a hereditary, tribal leader, Wakanda has no democratic tradition. Although the Black Panther has retained political legitimacy throughout the centuries, in the new millennium Wakandans have begun to question the validity of their government.

International Role Wakandan isolationism goes beyond mere military restraint. The Wakandan government cut off any economic contact with foreigners like foreign aid or immigration. The country takes advantage of its isolated geography, which is bordered by mountains to block unwanted trespassers, and uses technological illusions to make it seem like there's nothing there. Wakanda even dresses

up a fraction of its citizens as the kind of impoverished individuals the West expects to see in African nations. They present themselves as a "nation of farmers" with nothing to offer the rest of the world. One of the root causes of international conflict is insecurity. Because they cannot be sure that other nations have peaceful intentions, they have to hide themselves to ensure survival.

However, avoiding international affairs has had its challenges. In the 1990's, Ulysses Klaue stole from the nation a quarter-tonne of vibranium. When the existence of the resource was exposed, King T'Chaka claimed and insisted that amount was all Wakanda had.

Wakanda has provided aid to their allies in the past. For instance, T'Challa granted asylum to US citizen Bucky Barnes, past HYDRA assassin. Some have questioned the decision, claiming it was based on personal interests by the king that could have risked their secret. Also, many have questioned if the risk was even worth it, given how they have kept hidden for so long and the situation wasn't of major implications. They have long-ignored events of potential global catastrophes, such as both World Wars and the Chitauri invasion in

New York, despite having enough technology to be a helpful asset and prevent deaths.

These aspects have triggered individuals like N'Jobu and Killmonger not only to question the decisions of the monarchy, but also to blame Wakanda for the poverty and suffering of the rest of the African continent. As Wakandans have used their technology mainly for self-defense and not aid.

### **Vibranium: what comes out of wakanda**

#### *Features of Vibranium and Possible Usage:*

Wakanda is rich in natural resources. Long ago, a meteor landed in Wakanda, creating a valuable non-renewable natural resource: vibranium. The nearly indestructible element crash landed from outer space years ago into the African region that would become Wakanda. The element severely impacted the environment of Wakanda, enriching the soil and plant life. The metal absorbs any kinetic energy directed at it, rendering it nearly indestructible. Unlike in most African countries, though, Wakanda's resources have been exceptionally well managed. The precious metal has been the key player in making Wakanda the most

technologically advanced nation on the planet. Vibranium forms a solid metal that is stronger than steel, but only a third of the weight, as well as being completely vibration absorbent. This makes the material nearly indestructible, as any attempt to physically damage the material will be negated on a molecular level as mechanical or kinetic energy will be absorbed instead of breaking any bonds in its magnetic properties. It has been stated to not only be a metal, but has also a variety of other properties wakandans use it for. They sew it into their clothes, implant it into their bodies as tattoos, and use it as a power source for the advanced technologies of their city. However, despite its near-indestructible nature, if it is not well managed, it is likely to disappear.

#### *Consequences of Sharing Vibranium (Past Events and Dangers):*

In 1992, Ulysses Klaue successfully stole billions of dollars worth of vibranium along with Erik Killmonger, Linda, and Limbani. He acquired a vibranium mining tool and adapted it into a prosthetic arm with an integrated weapon capable of powerful sonic blasts. He used it to steal a Wakandan



artefact with Erik Killmonger and later fought T'Challa with it until it was torn off his body. This arm contained a tracking device which was later used by Killmonger to find Klaue and break him out of CIA custody. He also robbed the Museum of Great Britain, where he stole a vibranium axe and he later sold to a buyer in South Korea in 2016.

In February 1940, Howard Stark presented vibranium in Los Angeles. This metal was acquired by Stark Industries researchers in Africa. Stark industries kept it in the workshop for necessary use only. After successfully proving himself as a soldier in the battlefield, Steve Rogers was taken to a U.S. Army facility. He entered Howard Stark's workshop where Stark presented him with different types of shields to adopt as his main weapon as Captain America. The Vibranium kept in the workshop was used in the suit and allowed it to be bulletproof and also allowed the user to be seemingly unfazed when being struck by bullets.

## **Current Trade and Policies**

### **Wakanda's Isolation Policy**

Wakandan isolationism goes beyond military restraint. The Wakandan government encouraged and has proceeded to cut any economic contact with foreigners. They in no way promote or involve themselves in foreign aid or immigration. The country takes advantage of its isolated geography, which is bordered by mountains, in order to block any trespassers or people who don't belong to the country. They use advanced technology for it to appear as if there were nothing there. Wakanda, to protect themselves, refer to their country as a "third world country" and describe their citizens as impoverished individuals with little to no resources. Wakanda's goal is to be recognized, for security purposes, as a "nation of farmers" with nothing to offer to the rest of the world.

Wakanda's "way" of safety is very similar to a theory called defensive realism. Defensive realists believe one of the root causes of international conflict is insecurity. Because countries cannot be sure that other nations have peaceful intentions, they have to arm themselves to ensure survival, which is exactly the case of Wakandan civilization. Since they can't tell if other countries have a good or bad intention, they simply respond

by strengthening their own military. However, this is a weak strategy, if countries seek only to secure themselves, they are most likely going to end up in conflict with their neighbors who want the same.

Another reason why they stick so strictly to their isolation policy is because Wakanda pointedly refuses to give their technology to the outside world. This, of course has its benefits because it allows for incredible country development, but it can get out of hand. In the case of characters like Nakia, she strongly believed this isolation can do good and has no intention whatsoever of becoming colonizers. However, Killmonger wants to take advantage of their power and put it to bad use, colonizing the entire world.

## **Management and Limited Trade of Resources**

### *Economy of Vibranium*

Because of its self-isolation, Wakanda has an economic model that does not require the trade of natural resources with the rest of the world. It is a country that solely invests in their well-being and in technology. African countries, on the other

hand depend heavily on their exports of natural resources because they don't have access to Vibranium. For example, in 2015 alone, mineral and oil exports made up more than 90 percent of exports in Guinea, Nigeria, and Angola. This export of over 90 percent led to misaligned exchange rates, the decline of non-resource sectors, political authoritarianism, conflict, and economic inequality. Wakanda's monopoly on vibranium and its government-controlled limited sale is what has allowed them to be as successful as they are. The high quality of its governance suggests that Wakanda would also be able to manage the expected revenues from trade for current and future generations of Wakandans.

While few countries mirror Wakanda's isolationism, this nation does share many similarities with Norway and Botswana in terms of owning valuable natural resources that need to be carefully managed. Indeed, in the real world, such a fate is not inevitable in every resource rich African country. For instance, Botswana, one of the world's largest producers of diamonds, has not fallen victim to the 'resource curse' and has done so by implementing a three-pronged method, as

highlighted in a 2012 African Development Bank brief. First, Botswana pursued economic diversification with mixed success. Second, the country established a fiscal rule that separates expenditures from revenues and thus shields expenditures from fluctuations in diamond prices. Third, it invested diamond revenues for the use of future generations, using a sovereign wealth fund called the Pula Fund. Outside of Africa, oil-rich Norway has been praised for its management of natural resources, largely based on the investment in its sovereign wealth fund. In addition, Norway spends about 4 percent of the fund on public projects. In the comics, the country sets aside a generous portion of vibranium revenue to create a social safety net

### *Illegal Trafficking*

"When stolen Wakandan vibranium was used to make a terrible weapon, we in Wakanda were forced to question our legacy. Those men and women killed in Nigeria were part of a goodwill mission from a country too long in the shadows. We will not, however, let misfortune drive us back. We will fight to improve the world we wish to join." - T'CHALLA

In 1992, Ulysses Klaue successfully stole billions of dollars worth of vibranium from Wakanda with the help of the Wakandan prince N'Jobu, which he sold until 2015. Ultron used the vibranium to create several bodies for his consciousness as well as to combine it with technology in an attempt to eradicate humanity. Ultron also used the vibranium in conjunction with Helen Cho's Cradle to create a synthetic vibranium body; however, it was stolen by the Avengers, who uploaded the remnants of Tony Stark's personal A.I. J.A.R.V.I.S. into the body, giving birth to Stark's Android. After T'Challa caught and arrested Ulysses Klaue in Busan, Klaue had managed to escape with the help of his enforcers.

### **Movements Against Isolation - Current Situation**

Some individuals have advocated against the isolationist policies and ideas of the monarchy. Erik Killmonger, for instance, defeated T'Challa and temporarily became a legitimate king. With his power, he started an operation to send Wakandan resources and technology for African-descent people from around the world, for them to fight

against their oppressors. This ultimately lead to a confrontation between Killmonger and the Border Tribe against T'Challa, the Dora Milaje and the Jabari Tribe. While Killmonger's exact plan to aid the foreigners wasn't clearly outlined, his sentiment resonated with some of the Wakandans.

This wasn't the first time someone attempted something similar. N'Jobu, Killmonger's father, tried in the past to initiate a revolution in other parts of the world, lead by oppressed African-descents. This caused him to reveal the existence of the country's resources to Ulysses Klaue, black-market dealer, which then even lead to the death of Wakandan citizens.

However, not every ideological expression against isolationism has been extreme. Nakia, part of the Wakandan War-Dogs, has stated her position against the policies of self-defense in a more neutral manner, advocating for the aid to other countries without colonizing them or imposing their rule.

## **Block positions**

### **Royal Family Positions**

- **T'Challa:** The titular "Black Panther" and king of Wakanda. He takes the throne following the death of his father T'Chaka, and spends much of the time grappling with his father's legacy as well as the longstanding isolationist policies of Wakanda. Though T'Challa is confident and aggressive in his role as Black Panther, warrior and defender of Wakanda, he is initially conservative and indecisive in his role as king. He deeply values community, expressed in his obligation to and affection for his family and his countrymen.

- **Shuri:** Shuri is T'Challa's younger sister and the princess of Wakanda. She is Wakanda's leading scientist, designing all of the Black Panther's combat gear. While she does not express any overtly political beliefs concerning Wakanda's policies, she does not take much of the country's older culture and traditions seriously. She is competitive with T'Challa and frequently tries to take him down but in an affectionate way.

### **Dora Milaje representatives:**

- **Okoye:** Okoye is a general in Wakanda's military and leader of the Dora Milaje, the king's royal guard. She is extremely competent and direct in executing her missions. This can make her appear

impatient and prickly, but she often shows herself to be humorous and affectionate. She is fiercely loyal to T'Challa, as well as the institutions and traditions of Wakanda.

**Border Tribe representatives:**

- **W'Kabi:** W'Kabi is the head of security for Wakanda's border. Though he is a close friend of T'Challa, he is skeptical of T'Challa's strength as a leader. These skepticisms are amplified by T'Challa's failure to capture Ulysses Klaue, but W'Kabi's reserved emotions lead no one to suspect his feelings until he sides with Killmonger during the coups. He and Okoye are romantically involved, leading them into an emotional conflict during the final battle.

**Jabari Tribe representatives:**

- **M'Baku:** Leader of the Jabari, a Wakandan tribe which lives in the mountains outside of the central government's control. He disdains other Wakandans for looking down on his people. A strong warrior, he challenges T'Challa for the throne and grows to respect him both for defeating him in combat and sparing his life. This ultimately leads him to join T'Challa in his bid to retake the throne from Killmonger. His tough exterior and hostile behavior hides a deep concern for the welfare of his people.

**Hatut Zeraze/ War Dogs:** central intelligence service of Wakanda

- **Nakia:** Nakia is a "War Dog," one of the spies that Wakanda sends into the outside world. While not openly hostile to Wakanda's traditions, she quietly disagrees with its isolationist policies. As a War Dog, she works to undermine human trafficking operations in Africa. She also gently encourages T'Challa to open up Wakanda to the outside world. However, in contrast to Killmonger, she believes that peaceful cooperation and exchange of culture and technology is the best path to uplifting black communities around the world.

**Erik Killmonger (N'Jadaka):**

Born in Oakland to Prince N'Jobu and an African American mother, he has a far more acute sense of the global conditions of black people than native Wakandans. Consequently, he wants to gain the throne of Wakanda and use its advanced technology in order to liberate oppressed black people around the world. Dubbed "Killmonger" for his prodigious combat abilities and penchant for killing, he values power and dominance as paths to both liberation and self-actualization. His anger stems from both the murder of his father and the oppression

of the African American community he grew up in, and he resents T'Challa and the Wakandans for closing themselves off to the problems of the world.

### **United States of America:**

Vibranium is a key component of several products in the United States including shields, left arms and a seemingly endless supply of bodies for a homicidal AI consciousness. S.H.I.E.L.D. director Nick Fury warned that higher vibranium prices would damage their ability to prevent threats from the Mad Titan Thanos and could result in massive layoffs, starting with Hawkeye.

## **Possible solutions**

### **Remain isolated**

One of the agreements that could be reached would be for Wakanda to remain isolated from the world and safeguard the use of vibranium themselves. Vibranium, like any powerful technology, possesses great potential and could be quite catastrophic in the wrong hands. Keeping Wakanda hidden may be the only way to ensure that vibranium is never used for evil. This world has seen other forms of powerful technology have severe negative repercussions: Ultron reaped chaos no more

than a few years ago. T'Challa also believes that if Wakanda chooses to change its isolation policy, they will “lose [their] way of life”. The effects of globalization and the expansion of western civilization will inevitably have a noticeable effect on the culture and traditions of the Wakandan society, which has functioned independently for so long. Is the benefit of opening Wakanda's doors to the world really worth the risk it poses?

### **Utilize the power of vibranium to liberate other oppressed African peoples**

The opinion held by Killmonger is that the resources from vibranium should not be kept hidden in Wakanda and should rather be used to liberate the large number of people of African descent living in impecunious and oppressive conditions worldwide. He does not approve of Wakanda's isolationist policies and finds it morally wrong for the country to stand idle as they possess the resources to free black people from their oppressors. In many ways it is selfish for Wakanda to remain hidden and reap the benefits of vibranium only for themselves while so many people live in much worse conditions right outside their

borders. Using vibranium to aid these oppressed peoples, however, would inevitably lead to a global conflict as it would mean utilizing strength and force to ensure these people their rights. It would also entail revealing the existence of vibranium to the world and all the risks that entails.

### **Open access to vibranium to the world**

This solution would entail revealing the existence of Wakanda to the international community, opening its borders to the world and sharing the power of vibranium. solution is supported by Nakia, who believes this is the best way to manage the resource. The extent to which this is done, as well as how it is done, can be quite variable. If Wakanda is going to take this huge step forward, decisions must be made about how they will reveal the news to the world and how to distribution of vibranium will be managed. This includes determining what restriction it will have, to whom it will be available and how will its use be supervised to ensure its proper usage. The Wakandan council must also decide to what extent they will allow international influence and interference in their nation and

basically create their entire foreign affairs policy. Another key component that must be considered is the safeguarding of Wakandan culture and lifestyle, determining how western influence will be controlled.

### **Questions resolution must answer**

1. Should the nation of Wakanda, which has long lived in isolation, be concerned about external conflicts in the world?
2. Should Wakanda be open to give international aid to countries in need of resources?
3. How should Wakanda help those other countries? And to what extent?
4. How should internal management of Vibranium be altered if there are “open borders”? Should there be international supervision over this?
5. What would be some negative consequences of sharing Vibranium?
6. How will the sharing of resources affect the already on-going illegal trafficking of Vibranium?
7. Should the committee consider a change in the Wakandan government

system (which is currently based on a monarchy and tribes)?

8. How will Wakanda decide which countries to help?
9. Will Wakanda share scientific knowledge with other countries for purposes of research? What are the risks of doing this? Is it morally correct to not share Wakandan scientific findings with the rest of the world?
10. Should Wakanda offer shelter for refugees from near African and Middle Eastern countries in need? What about countries in need from far away regions such as Latin America (Nicaragua, Venezuela, etc)? Will there be retribution from conservative groups regarding the arrival of new cultures? What will be their place in Wakandan society? How will they fit in with our tribes? How could we prepare our tribes for this cultural immersion?
11. How will Wakanda respond to private companies wanting to come to the country? (Starbucks, etc)
12. What are the economic implications of maintaining Wakanda isolated

from the rest of the world? What other possible outcomes could arise?

## **Closing remarks**

Delegates are urged to remember this committee is based exclusively on the Marvel Cinematic Universe, NOT Marvel Comics. This includes all movies where Vibranium or Wakanda have been involved. The committee will take place on the timeframe AFTER the Battle of Mount Bashenga (which takes place in *Black Panther* (2018)) and BEFORE T'Challa decided Wakanda will open itself to the world, which means before the post-credit scene in the movie. If you have questions regarding this or any other matters please approach us before or during the conference. Delegates are expected to look into similar real-world scenarios of global cooperation themes such as

refugee crisis and immigration policies in other countries as guidance. The committee will be using slightly altered procedures which will be posted in the LMUN website.

Even if the topic of committee is fictional, we think it's an opportunity to



explore realistic issues seen through a different lense. We are looking forward for enthusiastic delegates who are passionate about the topic and are able to make this a serious committee. We are thrilled to see everybody participating and finding viable solutions considering all factors.

### **Further research**

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### **Endnotes**

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