



RESEARCH ARTICLE

COUNTER TERRORISM IN AFRICA: A SPEECH ACT SCRUTINY OF ANTÓNIO GUTERRES' AND DR. LIZ SHERWOOD-RANDALL'S REMARKS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 17th May, 2026

Received in revised form

20th June, 2026

Accepted 27th July, 2026

Published online 31st August, 2026

Keywords:

Counter-Terrorism, Commissive Acts, Declarative Acts, Directive Acts, Assertive Acts.

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ABSTRACT

In light of Searle's (1969) taxonomy of speech acts, this paper scrutinizes two selected high-level remarks by António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall respectively at the occasions of African Regional High-Level Conference on Counter-terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism held on 10 July 2019 and the United Nations Security Council High-Level Debate on Counter-terrorism in Africa held on November 10, 2022. Using a mixed method, the study aims to identify, analyse and interpret the different speech acts in the selected remarks so as to decode the deep messages conveyed through them. The results reveal a predominance of assertive acts in both remarks with 58.82% and 73.52% followed by commissive acts, 17.64% and 16.17% and directive acts 11.76% and 05.88% respectively in Remarks 1 and 2. Expressive acts represent 09.41% and 04.41% while declarative acts are very low in proportions with 02.35% in Remark 1 but completely non-existent in Remark 2. The study contends that the predominance of assertive acts indicates the great trauma as well as the lasting damages that terrorism is causing to individuals, families and communities in almost all regions of Africa. The proportions of commissive acts suggest the strong commitment of the international community to work together with African leaders to tackle terrorism. This strong commitment is strengthened by directive acts through which António Guterres urges UN Security Council to provide sustainable financial support to African peace-enforcing and counter-terrorism operations while Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall requests recommendations from the high-level representatives of the UN, AU, Economic Community of West African States, and Group of Five-Sahel so that the United States can provide effective support to Africa.

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Citation: Dr. Servais Dieu-Donné Yédia Dadjo, Dr. Daniel T. Yokossi and Dr. Cocou André Datondji. 2026. "Counter terrorism in Africa: A speech act scrutiny of António Guterres' and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall's remarks". *International Journal of Current Research*, 18, (08), 38054-38060.

INTRODUCTION

Social peace and stability are crucial for the wellbeing/welfare of the population as well as for the development of a country. Indeed, social peace and stability enable people to carry out their daily activities freely for the purpose of satisfying their basic needs as well as contributing to the development of their countries. Unfortunately, due to many reasons including poverty, unemployment, extremism radicalisation to mention just these few instances, some marginalized and frustrated people get manipulated and recruited by terrorist groups such as al-Qa'ida and ISIS affiliates to perpetrate violent attacks with disastrous consequences namely deaths of thousands people and many property damages in different regions of Africa. In turn, such situations affect seriously the economic growth of countries. It is observed that the threat of terrorism and terrorism attacks perpetrated in many regions of Africa immerse African children, women and men in situations of trauma. In fact, the increasing spread of terrorism affects the

population, local government of African countries and the international community. It draws everybody's attention at every national and international levels nowadays. The issue of terrorism has involved many debates and conferences in all parts of the world. Such a critical issue requires scrutiny. This clears up why this research work investigates counter terrorism in Africa. The study seeks to scrutinize two selected high-level remarks by António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall respectively at the occasions of African Regional High-Level Conference on Counter-terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism held on 10 July 2019 and the United Nations Security Council High-Level Debate on Counter-terrorism in Africa held on November 10, 2022. The study examines the selected remarks in light of Searle's (1969) taxonomy of speech acts. In fact, speech act is a remarkable perspective to language study dating back to Austin (1962) that deciphers every aspect of language use at different layers encompassing speaker's intended meaning, the effects utterances produce on listeners or readers, how more gets

communicated than is said or simply the contextual meaning or the dimensions of meaning as communicated by a speaker in terms of Yule (1996). In this sense, the study aims to identify, analyse and interpret the different speech acts in the selected remarks so as to decode the deep messages conveyed through them. In regard to the problems related to terrorism understandably premised higher up, this research paper seeks to answer the subsequent subject matters framed as: which speech acts do António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall use basically to convey which meanings? Considering the high-level political context of production of the selected remarks, António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall supposedly use assertive, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative speech acts in their remarks to decipher the issue of terrorism in Africa so as to convene the African leaders and the international community counter it efficiently. For clarity purposes, the study encompasses an introduction, a methodology, theoretical underpinnings, a data analysis, an interpretation of the findings and a conclusion.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed method has helped carry out this research work which focuses on the speech acts analysis of two selected high-level remarks by António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall respectively at the occasions of African Regional High-Level Conference on Counter-terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism Conductive to Terrorism held on 10 July 2019 and the United Nations Security Council High-Level Debate on Counter-terrorism in Africa held on November 10, 2022. It is worthy to note that António Guterres' remark has been labelled Remark 1 whereas Liz Sherwood-Randall's remark has been labelled Remark 2. At a first step, a key has been determined for the identification of the speech acts. Following the quantitative method, this key has enabled the researcher to carry out a sentence-by-sentence speech act analysis of the selected remarks by labelling between brackets, both the type and the number of the speech act identified. At a second step, a recapitulative table of the statistics of the frequency distribution of the different types of speech acts identified in Remarks 1 and 2 has been provided. At a third step, the statistical results have been interpreted and discussed following the qualitative research method principles.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

As mentioned higher up, this study scrutinizes two selected high-level remarks by António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall in light of Searle's (1969) taxonomy of speech acts. As a matter of fact, the five types of speech acts, especially illocutionary acts, that Searle (1975) develops are presented as follows:

- Assertive speech acts state or express what the speaker believes to be the case or not (Searle in Yule, 1996: 53). It shows the true condition of the meaning of the utterance. They include asserting, concluding, affirming, alleging; announcing, answering, attributing, claiming, classifying, concurring, confirming, conjecturing, denying disagreeing, disclosing, disputing, informing, insisting, predicting, ranking, Assorting, stating, stipulating.
- Directive speech acts are used by speakers to get someone else to do something (Searle in Yule, 1996: 54).

It is a condition when the speaker requests the hearer to carry out some actions or to bring out some states or affairs. they include requesting, questioning, advising, admonishing, asking, begging, dismissing, excusing, forbidding, instructing, ordering, permitting, requiring, suggesting, urging, and warning.

- Commissive speech acts are used by speakers to commit themselves to do something in the future (Searle in Yule, 1996: 54). These acts express what the speaker intends to do. They encompass promising, threatening, offering, agreeing, guaranteeing, inviting, swearing, and volunteering.
- Expressive speech acts enable speakers to state what they feel (Searle in Yule, 1996: 53). They express the psychological states and can be statements of pleasure, pain, likes, dislike, joy or sorrow. They comprise greetings, thanking, apologizing, complaining, congratulating.
- Declarative speech acts can change world by the utterances which are produced. Searle (1975) states that declaratives are kinds of speech acts that change the world via their utterances. It is worthy to stress that the world change intended here refers to any situations such as social status of a person, the ownership of something etc. They include declaring, baptizing, resigning, firing from employment, hiring, arresting, excommunicating, christening, marrying).

DATA ANALYSIS

This section stresses the analysis of the different types of speech acts that are carefully identified in Remarks 1 and 2 for the purpose of determining their frequency distribution on the one hand and providing insightful interpretation of these statistical results on the other hand.

Speech Acts Identification in Remark 1 (by António Guterres to the African Regional High-Level Conference on Counter Terrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism Conductive to Terrorism)

The identification of speech acts is carried out in accordance with the following keys: Ass = assertive, Dir = directive, Com = commissive, Dec = declaration, Exp = expressive.

Your Excellency, Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank the Government of Kenya for helping the United Nations organize this landmark conference (Exp1). To begin, I would like to honour the tens of thousands of African victims of terrorism and to express solidarity with African countries that have suffered terrorist attacks that shock with their barbarity and disregard for human life (Exp2). Kenya itself has endured numerous terrorist attacks (Ass1). This year alone, terrorists murdered 21 people in the Dusit hotel complex in Nairobi and, in Wajir County, eight police officers were killed and others injured when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device (Ass2). The threat of terrorism in Africa is spreading and destabilizing entire regions (Ass3). I am greatly concerned by the situation in the Sahel and increasing risks in West Africa (Exp3). Boko Haram and its splinter faction continue to terrorize local populations and attack security forces in northeast Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin despite the considerable efforts of the Multinational Joint Task Force (Ass4).

Table. Frequency Distribution of the Speech Acts in Speeches 1 and 2

Types of Speech Acts	Speech N°1 (António Guterres' Remark)	Speech N°2(Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall's Remark)
	Frequency and percentage	Frequency and percentage
Assertive	50 [58.82%]	50 [73.52%]
Commissive	15 [17.64%]	11 [16.17%]
Directive	10 [11.76%]	04 [05.88%]
Expressive	08 [09.41%]	03 [04.41%]
Declarative	02 [02.35%]	00 [00%]
Total	85 [99.98% ≈100%]	68 [99.98% ≈100%]

In Mali, terrorist groups have launched regular attacks against local and international security forces, including the Blue Helmets serving in MINUSMA (Ass5). The violence has spilled over into neighbouring countries, with an alarming number of recent attacks in Burkina Faso and Niger (Ass5). There is an urgent need for the international community to support Member States in this region to strengthen national capacities and resilience against terrorism (Ass6). The trauma from terrorism causes lasting damage to individuals, families and communities (Ass7). In Africa, as elsewhere, terrorists continue to use sexual violence to spread fear and assert control, and children are often forced to join terrorist groups as a matter of survival (Ass8). The people of Africa continue to show great courage and resilience in challenging those who seek to spread violence and hatred (Ass9). From working within their families and communities to prevent the spread of radicalisation and recruitment, to serving in AMISOM, MINUSMA, the G5 Sahel Joint Force, the *Multinational Joint Task Force* against Boko Haram and similar missions, the people of Africa are on the front line of efforts to tackle terrorism and the spread of violent extremism (Ass10). I deeply believe that African peace-enforcing and counter-terrorism operations must have strong and clear mandates by the UN Security Council backed by sufficient, predictable and sustainable financial support, namely through assessed contributions (Dir1). The determination of Africans to find solutions to the scourge of terrorism is clear (Ass11). And the role of women is inspirational in so many ways (Ass12). We have with us women from Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Tunisia and elsewhere (Ass13).

All over the continent women are taking matters into their own hands, engaging with local leaders, mayors, young people, children and their fellow men, to fight against exclusion, marginalisation, inequality and abuse – the conditions that lead many to radicalisation and conflict (Ass14). Their experiences also tell us that radicalisation, terrorism and conflict cannot be resolved through enforcement alone (Ass15). For terrorism to be defeated, it is essential that African counter-terrorism is holistic, well-funded, underpinned by respect for human rights, and -- most importantly -- backed by strong political will (Dir2). This is also true of operations mandated by the UN Security Council (Dir3). We must not allow terrorism to undermine the great progress that is being made on this continent (Dir4). Africa remains a top priority for the United Nations (Com1). We share common goals, particularly on delivering Agenda 2063 – in full alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and our joint aim for an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa (Ass16). In these efforts, the United Nations works closely with the African Union and many regional and sub-regional coordination mechanisms represented here today (Ass17). We believe in African leadership to develop African solutions to African problems (Dir5). So I am delighted to be here to demonstrate my full support for the aims of this conference (Exp3).

Let me outline what I hope it will achieve over the next two days (Ass18). First, I would like to see the development of new and strengthened partnerships, both between African states and between Africa and the rest of the international community, to tackle the threat of terrorism and violent extremism (Com2). There are many excellent examples of African countries working together to share counter-terrorism information, expertise and good practices, such as the innovative cross-border initiative on preventing violent extremism along the Kenya-Ethiopia border with the support of the United Nations (Ass19). But I believe that more can be done to expand these partnerships and networks and to unify this continent and the wider Global South against the threat of terrorism (Com3). The transnational nature of terrorism and violent extremism underscores the vital importance of multilateral cooperation to detect, identify and disrupt violent extremism and to bring terrorists to justice (Ass20). That is why I convened the first-ever High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States in New York in June last year (Ass21). In my Chair's Summary to close that conference, I promised that the United Nations would work with Member States to organize regional conferences on key thematic issues to sustain momentum and feed into the next High-level Conference in June next year (Ass22). This is the third such regional conference and the only one where all Member States have been invited (Ass23). This is because this conference can help to mobilize the entire international community to strengthen its political commitment and provide resources and expertise to support African counter-terrorism efforts (Ass24). Second, I hope this conference will underline the continuing need to address the drivers and enablers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism (Com4). Nothing can justify terrorism and violent extremism, but we must also acknowledge that they do not arise in a vacuum (Ass25).

Narratives of grievance, actual or perceived injustice and promised empowerment become attractive wherever human rights are being violated, good governance is being ignored and aspirations are being crushed (Ass26). A study from the United Nations Development Programme on the threat of violent extremism in Africa found that lack of education and poverty were factors behind radicalization (Ass27). But the final tipping point was often state violence and the abuse of power (Ass28). There needs to be a renewed and sustained focus on prevention, including addressing the underlying conditions that cause young men and women to be lured by terrorism (Dir5). This includes preventing conflicts, addressing fragility, strengthening state institutions and civil society, building durable peace and promoting sustainable development to tackle the poverty, inequality and lack of opportunity that feed despair (Dir6). Third, this conference is an opportunity to explore how we can put even greater emphasis on encouraging "bottom-up" local solutions to the challenges of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa (Com5). We all know there is no "one size fits all" approach to address the conditions conducive

to terrorism (Ass29). So, we need to engage affected communities and decentralize our efforts wherever possible to reflect local realities (Com6). This means adopting comprehensive and inclusive “all-of-society” approaches to preventing and countering terrorism at the grassroots level (Com7). We must fully engage women, who play multiple roles in relation to violent extremism and its prevention – as victims, as those recruited and radicalized, but most importantly as influencers and leaders in prevention and agents of peace (Com8). The meaningful inclusion of women will also strengthen our own responses (Com9). Common to each of these groups, regardless of their ideology, is the subjugation of women’s and girls’ rights (Ass30). This is not a coincidence, it is foundational to their creed, and for this reason gender equality must be equally central in our response (Com10). And we must support civil society organizations to deliver tailored programmes to strengthen community resilience and turn vulnerable individuals away from violence (Com11). I am delighted to see so many civil society representatives here today, who have unique knowledge and access to their communities across Africa (Exp4). Fourth, I hope this conference considers practical ways to harness the creativity, energy and power of young people to strengthen resilience against terrorism and build more peaceful, just and inclusive societies (Com12). Three-quarters of Africa’s population of over 1.3 billion are under the age of 35 (Ass31). Nearly half are under the age of 15 (Ass32). We know that in Africa – as elsewhere around the world – creating jobs and expanding opportunity for young people are major challenges (Ass33). And we also know that youth unemployment not only limits personal fulfilment and drains away hope, it also undermines social cohesion and could threaten security (Ass34). We need to make a strategic investment in these young people through increased education, training and employment opportunities (Com13). Indeed, job creation for young people must be at the centre of any development strategy (Dir6). As set out in the 2015 Amman Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security and Security Council resolution 2250, young Africans should also be fully involved in developing and implementing strategies and activities to prevent and counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism (Dir7). With the rise of misinformation on social media and the Internet, young people also need education and empowerment to denounce manipulative narratives, xenophobia and hate speech, which can all lead to online radicalization (Dir8).

I look forward to hearing youth perspectives throughout this conference and especially in tomorrow morning’s session (Dir9). Fifth, I urge this conference to exchange ideas on how we can further support the victims and survivors of terrorism, including victims of sexual violence and children exploited by terrorist groups (Dir10). Victims are extremely powerful and credible messengers (Ass35). Their experiences put a human face to the impact of terrorism and help to counter the distorted narratives of terrorists and violent extremists (Ass36). When we listen to the voices of victims of terrorism, uphold their rights and provide them with support and justice, we are reducing the lasting damage done by terrorists (Ass37). So, I am delighted that the United Nations will convene the first-ever Global Congress of Victims in New York in June next year (Exp5). Finally, I hope this conference will consider how the United Nations can enhance its counter-terrorism support to African Member States and regional and sub-regional organizations (Com14).

When I became Secretary-General, I was determined to reform the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture to meet the growing needs of countries around the world (Ass38). The establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact means we have a clear framework and solid platform for our work (Ass39). We have prioritized capacity-building projects for African countries on issues such as mitigating the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, empowering and engaging youth, countering terrorist financing and improving aviation security (Ass40). I recently launched a major multi-year programme to assist Member States in countering terrorist travel, which will initially focus on the Horn of Africa and Sahel regions (Ass41). But there is more we can do and I look forward to hearing your suggestions (Ass42). Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, Africa is increasingly the new frontline in the global struggle against terrorism and violent extremism (Ass43). Yesterday I saw how a community, ravaged by violence and radicalization, can turn things around (Ass44). It took commitment from community leaders, young people, local government and beyond, but it was possible (Ass45). It took years but it was possible (Ass46). Most importantly, it took political commitment (Ass47). We can all learn a lot from the determination, unity and courage of the people of Kamukunji (Ass48). We should aim to reproduce the wisdom of those in power who saw what was happening in the community and helped to raise them up (Com14). The United Nations was also there to help, but it was local leaders who led the way (Ass49). African states have made considerable efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism at national and regional levels, including through the African Union Peace and Security Architecture (Ass50). It is now time for the international community to step up and provide the financial and technical resources needed to support African-owned and led counter-terrorism efforts, while fully respecting human rights, the rule of law and gender considerations (Dec1). The United Nations remains fully committed to working with all of you to address the evolving threat of terrorism and violent extremism and help build a more secure and prosperous future that all Africans deserve (Dec2). I wish you a productive conference (Exp6). Thank you (Exp7).

Speech Acts Identification in Remark 2 (by Homeland Security Advisor Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall at the United Nations Security Council High-Level Debate on “Counterterrorism in Africa – An Imperative for Peace, Security, and Development”): Mr. President, I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to you for bringing us all together and for elevating this vital conversation (Exp1). Your country is on the frontlines, surrounded by security threats on your borders (Ass1). Your government has developed a thoughtful approach to countering terrorism, and you have distinguished yourself as a regional leader who is committed to deepening collaboration and cooperation with your neighbors in the face of this existential threat (Ass2). I also want to thank Deputy Secretary General Mohammed, Chairperson Faki, Director von Seherr-Thoss, and Dr. Ero (Exp2). I have listened closely to each of you and have learned a lot (Ass3). The United States fully agrees that none of us can effectively meet the terrorism challenge alone (Ass4). Our experience since September 11, 2001 – and even before that – has proven that we are much stronger when we stand together in the fight against terrorism so that we can enable people to build peaceful lives and live free from fear (Ass5). I would like discuss this growing threat

to Africa and how the United States is approaching it (Ass6). And most important, I would like to offer perspective on how we can do even more together (Ass7). As you all know, countering terrorism has been a top priority for the United States for two decades and even before (Ass8). But over the years, the threat has evolved (Ass9). It has become more ideologically diverse (Ass10). And it has become more geographically diffuse (Ass11). Nowhere is this evolution in the global terrorism landscape more vivid than in Africa, where terrorist groups, from al-Qa'ida branches to ISIS affiliates, now collectively occupy vast swaths of territory and extract benefits from millions of suffering people (Ass12). Across every region of the vast continent, they brutalize and terrorize civilians (Ass13). In Burkina Faso, terrorist groups attack villagers and displace farmers from their sole source of income (Ass14). In Nigeria, ISIS affiliates have massacred worshippers in churches (Ass15). In Mozambique last year, hundreds of Islamic militants linked to ISIS laid siege to an entire town, holding guests in a hotel hostage (Ass16). In Mali, violent extremists continue to kill UN peacekeepers, making the MINUSMA one of the most dangerous peacekeeping missions in the world (Ass17). In Kenya, al-Shabaab has threatened election workers and polling sites, and targeted universities, shopping centers, and other locations that people frequent (Ass18). And in Somalia, al-Shabaab targets and kills civilians—including more than 100 Somali educators and first responders during tragic bombings less than two weeks ago where an additional 300 people were injured (Ass19). Across the region, terrorists also attack Americans and other foreign citizens, including from countries represented around this table (Ass20). Still, there is reason for optimism where populations are rising up against terror to reclaim their communities (Ass21).

The United States stands with African Governments and the African people who are confronting this threat every day (Ass22). Counterterrorism successes are hard-won and often take place out of the public view (Ass23). Unfortunately, terrorist acts are far more visible (Ass24). According to the U.S. Department of Defense, violence from militant Islamist groups in Africa has risen 300% over the last decade with 95% of that increase concentrated in the Western Sahel and Somalia (Ass25). And as I have discussed with President Bazoum and President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, and as I expect to discuss today with President Akufo-Addo — this violence is only rising (Ass26). So as members of the Security Council know: Terrorism in Africa is a shared challenge (Ass27). And it demands a collective response (Dir1). The United States is doing three key things to tackle this threat (Ass28). First, we are investing in governance, development, and diplomacy (Ass29). Second, we are deepening our ties with our African partners and empowering them to take the lead on this challenge (Ass30). And third, we are leveraging the collective strength of the international community, including the UN (Ass31). I want to take a few minutes to discuss each of these (Ass32). First, as I said, we are investing in governance, development and diplomacy (Ass33). The United States is pursuing an integrated strategy: (Ass34) One that addresses the drivers of radicalization (Ass35). One that supports effective governance (Ass36). And one that recognizes that stability and security are intertwined with opportunity and prosperity (Ass37). It is not just about fighting terrorists; it is about promoting economic opportunities that offer more attractive alternatives to young recruits than the terrorism enterprise would do and building institutions and capacity to hold those

who commit acts of terror to account through strong law enforcement and judicial systems (Ass38). Second, we are deepening our ties with our African partners and empowering them to take the lead on this challenge (Ass39). I have travelled to Djibouti, to Somalia, to Kenya, and to Niger in my current role (Ass40). I have seen first-hand how our diplomats, our intelligence professionals, and our military service members rely on local partners to understand and respond to terrorist threats (Ass41). A successful counterterrorism strategy in Africa must always be built on and led by citizens of the countries that we are working to support (Dir2). Our partners include local law enforcement, military personnel, public servants, and regional bodies—such as the African Union and its Regional Economic Communities (Ass42). The United States is asking our partners to identify and communicate their counterterrorism priorities (Dir3). We will rely on our regional counterparts to tell us what training and support they need (Com1). We will do everything we can to enable them to lead across the African continent (Com2). And we will empower them to conduct capacity-building efforts that enable more enduring outcomes (Com3). Third, the United States is leveraging the collective strength of the international community, including the UN (Ass43). More than 15 years ago, every UN member state signed onto the Global Counterterrorism Strategy—which promoted a shared vision and a common approach to fighting terrorism (Ass44). But this threat has changed substantially since we adopted that resolution, making the need for collaboration across the world more important than ever (Ass45). The United States will continue working with all partners to strengthen the use of UN 1267 sanctions against terrorists to induce a change in behavior (Com4). We will maintain our intensive work with the UN Counterterrorism Committees, the Office of Counterterrorism, and Counterterrorism Compact to monitor the latest terrorist threats (Com5). We will expand our collaboration to ensure security assistance is well-coordinated so that we maximize our impacts and do not duplicate or waste efforts (Com6). We are eagerly awaiting the recommendations of the ongoing joint assessment on the Sahel—a project undertaken by high-level representatives of the UN, AU, Economic Community of West African States, and Group of Five-Sahel—so that we can provide effective support where it is most needed. The outcomes of this Assort will be essential in shaping our next steps (Dir4).

Finally, our joint efforts must be grounded in democracy and built on a respect for the rule of law and human rights in order to succeed over the long term (Com7). When nations use terrorism as a pretext to silence political dissent or interfere with the activities of civil society, the effort to counter terror can become counter-productive—and actually contribute to greater divisiveness, dysfunction, and violence (Ass46). Similarly, when armed mercenary groups, including the Kremlin-backed Wagner group, commit human rights abuses, the security environment becomes even bleaker, and citizens pay the (Ass47). Let me close with this: (Ass48) As we all know, countering terrorism is a demanding task – and it is an enduring one (Ass49). The conditions that give rise to terrorism are complex and the perpetrators are innovative and ruthless (Ass50). But by investing in governance, development and diplomacy, empowering local partners, and—most important—working together in strong and collaborative partnerships, both bilaterally and multilaterally, we can more effectively counter the metastasizing terrorism threats we face in Africa (Com8). I look forward to continuing our

conversation, including next month at the U.S. Africa Leaders Summit in Washington DC (Com9). Security, stability, and counterterrorism will be top priorities on the agenda for the heads of state and government whom President Biden will be welcoming to the White House (Com10). Our goal is to generate greater understanding and commitment to working together to tackle the region's peace and security challenges (Com11). Thank you again, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and allowing me to speak to you today (Exp3).

Recapitulative Statistics of the Speech Acts Identified in Remarks 1 and 2: The statistics displayed in the table below recapitulate the frequency distribution of each speech act identified in Remarks 1 and 2.

INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS: The statistical results of the speech analysis recapitulated in the higher up table indicate a predominance of assertive speech acts in both remarks with 58.82% and 73.52% respectively. This predominance indicates the great trauma and the lasting damages that terrorism is causing to individuals, families and communities in almost all regions of Africa. Indeed, António Guterres has used different types of assertive speech acts including stating, asserting, announcing, denouncing, describing to mention just these few instances, basically to discuss the critical issue of terrorism threats and attacks that are spreading and destabilizing entire regions of Africa namely Kenya, Tchad, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Tunisia. These acts also enable him to determine the causes of terrorism and violent extremism as resulting from lack of education, poverty, state violence and abuse of power. In an almost similar vein, Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall has used assertive speech acts to discuss the critical threat of terrorism as becoming more ideologically diverse as well as more geographically diffuse in Africa. He has also used these acts to disclose how the United States is approaching the challenge of terrorism in Africa through three key strategies namely: investing in governance, development, and diplomacy; deepening US ties with African partners and empowering them to take the lead on this challenge; leveraging the collective strength of the international community, including the UN. Here too, the massive use of assertive speech acts by Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall indicates that countering terrorism is a top priority for the United States. The results also show that commissive speech acts represent 17.64% and 16.17% respectively in remarks 1 and 2. These speech acts play highly important roles as they indicate a significantly high degree of engagement or commitment of both António Guterres and Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall to counter terrorism efficiently in Africa. As a matter of, António Guterres commits to: develop new and strengthened partnerships between Africa and the rest of the international community to tackle the threat of terrorism and violent extremism; adopt comprehensive and inclusive approaches to preventing and countering terrorism at the grassroots level; fully engage women as influencers and leaders in prevention and agents of peace; make a strategic investment in these young people through increased education, training and employment opportunities.

On his part, Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall has used commissive acts to promise to generate greater understanding and commitment to working together with African states to tackle the region's peace and security challenges by empowering regional counterparts to conduct capacity-building efforts that enable more enduring outcomes. He also commits to continue

working with all partners to strengthen the use of UN 1267 sanctions against terrorists to induce a change in behaviour. More importantly, he commits to maintain security, stability, and counterterrorism as top priorities on the agenda of state and President Biden. Directive speech acts represent 11.76% and 05.88% respectively in remarks 1 and 2. Their presence in both remarks indicates that both António Guterres and Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall attempt to get the international community as well as African states to perform concrete and tangible actions for the purpose of tackling terrorism efficiently. In fact, António Guterres urges on the one hand, UN Security Council to provide sustainable financial support to African peace-enforcing and counter-terrorism operations and African states to develop African solutions to African problems on the other hand. As for Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall, he requests recommendations from the high-level representatives of the UN, AU, Economic Community of West African States, and Group of Five-Sahel so that the United States can provide effective support to Africa. Expressive speech acts appear with 09.52% and 04.41% respectively in remarks 1 and 2. Their presence helps have a view about both António Guterres' and Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall's psychological state. Indeed, through these acts, António Guterres has expressed his gratitude to Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, his solidarity with African countries that have suffered terrorist attacks and his great delight for having organised successfully the conference. On his part, Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall has used expressive speech to express his gratitude to all the participants of the conference. The proportions of declarative speech acts are very low in Remark 1 but completely non-existent in Remark 2. The complete absence of declarative acts in Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall's speech is meaningful. It indicates that he has no means or power to bring about any concrete and immediate change to the threat of terrorism in Africa. This is understandable since he is an advisor. The function of advisors is limited to provide ideas, plans, strategies that serve as basis for making decisions. At such a position, he is not liable to perform any acts by himself that can bring any immediate change to terrorism in Africa. On the contrary, with the position of United Nation Secretary General, António Guterres is endowed with full power to bring about change to the situation of terrorism in Africa.

CONCLUSION

This paper has scrutinized two selected high-level remarks by António Guterres and Dr. Liz Sherwood-Randall in light of Searle's (1969) taxonomy of speech acts for the purpose of identifying, analysing and interpreting the different speech acts in the selected remarks so as to decode the deep messages conveyed through them. Using a mixed method, the study has unveiled a predominance of assertive speech acts in both remarks with 58.82% and 73.52% respectively. This predominance indicates the great trauma and the lasting damages that terrorism is causing to individuals, families and communities in almost all regions of Africa. Commissive speech acts representing 17.64% and 16.17% respectively in remarks 1 and 2 have played highly important roles as they indicate a significantly high degree of engagement or commitment of both António Guterres and Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall to counter terrorism efficiently in Africa. Directive speech acts appearing with 11.76% and 05.88% in remarks 1 and 2 indicate that both António Guterres and Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall attempt to get the international community

as well as African states to perform concrete and tangible actions for the purpose of tackling efficiently terrorism. Expressive speech acts appearing with 09.52% in Remark 1 have helped António Guterres disclose his psychological state about his gratitude to the Kenyan President, his solidarity with African countries as well as his great delight for having organised successfully the conference whereas in Remark 2, these speech acts representing only 04.41% have enabled Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall to express briefly his gratitude to all the participants of the conference. The study also unveils very low proportions of declarative speech acts in Remark 1 with 02.38% but 0% in Remark 2. It has been contended that the complete absence of declarative acts in Dr Liz Sherwood-Randall's remark indicates that he has no means or power to bring about any concrete and immediate change to the threat of terrorism in Africa due to his position of advisor whereas António Guterres, as United Nation Secretary General, is endowed with full power to bring about change to the situation of terrorism in Africa.

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