

STATEMENT

**by Mr. Vladimir Lenev, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the International Organizations in Nairobi at the First session of the Executive Board of the UN-Habitat for the year 2022 in exercise of the right of reply to the delegations of the EU and the USA
(Nairobi, 29 March 2022)**

As a reaction to the accusations made against Russia, I would like to stress that it is inappropriate to politicize the work of UN-Habitat. Armed conflict in Ukraine is not the first since the time of UN-Habitat was established and I'm afraid it won't be the last.

After all means of diplomatic solutions were exhausted to stop the armed conflict, unleashed by the Kiev regime 8 years ago, the Russian Federation was forced to launch a special military operation - preventive in its nature. The purpose of the operation is to achieve demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine and to protect its Russian speaking population.

I want to emphasize once again – 8 years ago, after violent coup d'état the Kiev regime unleashed a war against the Russian-speaking part of the population of Ukraine with the silent approval of the Western countries. This war has claimed lives of more than 14 thousand people in the Donbas region, including the elderly, women and children. None of the Western countries has ever raised concern over this issue. The aim of the Russian armed forces is to put an end to this war.

The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation establish all the necessary conditions for the passage of the civilian population from the areas of active hostilities, provide residents of the liberated territories with food and medicine. Russia is providing all the necessary assistance to Ukrainian refugees.

When US and their allies bombed Yugoslavia, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, they preferred to maintain neutrality of UN-Habitat. But everything has changed immediately, once Russia began the struggle for demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine, stood up to protect the people of Donbas.

The NATO countries and the US in particular simply have no moral right to act as a judge in the Ukrainian crisis. Over the past 25 years, the United States and

its allies have unleashed 9 wars in different parts of the globe that have claimed lives of more than 11 million people. Their aggressive actions took lives of innocent people, civilians, including through carpet area bombardments, which are prohibited under the international humanitarian law.

If there is any actor, who is truly behind what is happening in Ukraine today, it is no other than the United States of America and NATO member countries. They have armed and continue to supply Ukrainian extremists and neo-nazis with lethal weapons. It only prolongs misery and suffering of civilians and leads to more and more casualties every day.

Common for NATO invasions practice of area-carpet bombardments of towns and cities has never and will never be used by the Russian Army.

The military of Russia, Donetsk and Lughansk People's Republics do their utmost, risking their own lives, to prevent civilian casualties. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian ultranationalists have learned this well and employ the tactics of "human shields" as part of their military doctrine by deploying heavy artillery in the midst of highly populated areas of the cities. And it's a war crime in accordance with the international humanitarian law.

Today, the way to a peaceful settlement does not lie through uncontrolled supply of weapons and mercenaries to Ukraine. The only way to it is to eliminate the root causes of the crisis and to establish a common security system based on mutual respect for legitimate security concerns of all countries.