STATEMENT
by H.E. Ambassador Yuriy KLYMENKO,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva

(Conference on Disarmament Plenary Meeting, February 26, 2020)

Mr. President,

Since this is the first time I am taking the floor under your Presidency, I would like to start by extending my warmest congratulations to you on the assumption of your duties and wishing you every success in this challenging endeavor.

Before I proceed, I would also like to use this opportunity to commend the Algerian and Argentinian Presidencies and their teams for their tireless efforts, aimed at pathing the way towards finding a breakthrough in the Conference on Disarmament, reflected in the recently distributed updated package of documents, which we find to be a good basis for further discussions.

Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,

Since my country was mentioned yesterday by the United States in the context of the Russian aggression, I would like to thank US delegation for the unwavering solidarity with Ukraine.

On my part, I have to highlight that this aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine is of ongoing nature. Just recently, on February 18, the Russian occupation forces have marked the sixth anniversary of armed aggression against Ukraine and the fifth anniversary of the Debaltseve tragedy by launching an artillery attack and infantry assault on Ukrainian positions in Luhansk region. Russian occupation forces have used weaponry banned under the Minsk agreements.

Russia has once again proved that it is not willing to engage constructively and in good faith with the peace process. Hostilities and violence on the ground, being committed by the Russian occupation forces on the everyday basis, jeopardise this fragile process, as well as dramatically decrease the safety and security of the civilian population who continue to suffer.

Let me remind that, as of today, about 44 000 square km - or some 7% of the territory of Ukraine – are under foreign occupation in blatant violation of the United Nations Charter. Over 14 thousand people killed and more than 27 000 wounded.
Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,

I have repeatedly drawn attention in this Chamber to the progressive threatening militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea by the Russian Federation, leading to the violation of the nuclear-free status of the Peninsula. In this vein, the strict implementation of the UNGA Resolution 74/17 of 13 December 2019 titled “The problem of militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine), as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov” is of paramount importance.

I am not tired to reiterate the negative impact on the global security architecture, caused by the blatant violation by the Russian Federation of the Budapest Memorandum, especially against the backdrop of the upcoming 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Not only the Budapest Memorandum, but Russia also persistently breaches the provisions of the CCW and BWC in the context of its aggression against Ukraine, which we have been regularly highlighting on relevant platforms, providing updated data in this regard. The violation by the Russian Federation of the INF Treaty significantly undermined regional and international stability.

We cannot turn a blind eye to that. Our august body doesn’t exist in a vacuum. In our search for renewing its substantive work, we have to maintain at the same time a constant connection with the reality, even though a vexing one.

I thank you.