

*Human rights activist Kenneth Roth says Israel's West Bank operation must not go down the path of Gaza*

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New York, August 29 (RHC)-- Kenneth Roth, former executive director of Human Rights Watch and visiting professor at Princeton University, said the increasing levels of Israeli violence against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank was a “very grave development.”

Under Israel’s military occupation of Palestinian territory, the standard of policing should be that which applies to normal law enforcement, “to the police on the street,” Roth told Al Jazeera.

“That means you cannot use lethal force except as a last resort to meet an imminent lethal threat,” Roth said.

“Now, it looks like that is not what Israel is doing. It is bombing away. And, indeed, the Israeli foreign minister – Israel Katz – said that this is a war. Now, in war, you can just shoot the other side’s combatants. No need to try and capture them. Nothing about last resort,” he said.

“So, Israel is now escalating its standards for the use of lethal force to war standards. That is a very grave development,” he added.

“The last thing that we want is this kind of massive displacement taking place in the West Bank too,” Roth told Al Jazeera.

“Frankly, ‘the dream’ of the far-right ministers in Netanyahu’s government is to ‘solve the problem’ of the West Bank. ‘Solve the problem’ of the apartheid regime that Israel is maintaining there, by just getting rid of the Palestinians,” Roth said.

“That would be a massive war crime. But this is what certain members of the Netanyahu government – whose votes in the Knesset Netanyahu needs to stay in power – this is what they talk about,” he said.

“This is an urgent reason to nip this in the bud and not to let this continue down the path that we have seen in Gaza,” he added.

[ SOURCE: AL JAZEERA ]

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