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在イスラエル日本大使  
竹内春久 様

日本 YWCA 会長 俣野尚子  
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イスラエル政府・軍関係者らが、パレスチナ西岸地区のオリーブ畑の破壊・接収行為を繰り返していることが、このたび JAI-Joint Advocacy Initiative(\*)の調査により明らかになりました。

最近では2月22日に、日本をはじめ、オランダ・ノルウェー・英国・米国の市民の寄付によりパレスチナ農家へ贈られた木を含む約300本のオリーブの木がイスラエル軍の独断で伐採され、世界の寄付者は失望し怒り、オリーブ栽培で生計を立てているパレスチナ農家は壊滅的な打撃を受けています。日本 YWCA でも平和の象徴であるオリーブの木を贈る「オリーブの木キャンペーン」を2004年より実施しており、これまで約1500本のオリーブの木が日本の市民から贈られ、地域の平和構築はもとより、パレスチナ農家の経済的自立、顔の見える支援、環境保全に寄与してきました。

この事件は氷山の一角にすぎず、イスラエル政府および軍が日常におこなっている、パレスチナ人の農地や家屋の破壊と接収は、パレスチナ西岸地区の実行支配を進めるイスラエル政府の戦略と言われています。

つきましては、事実確認のためにパレスチナの被害農家を訪問して下さるようお願い申し上げます。

ニュースの詳細は、添付の資料をご覧くださいましたら幸いです。

\* JAIとは、東エルサレム YMCA とパレスチナ YWCA が協働で運営しているグループで、オリーブの木の寄贈や農業支援などにより、パレスチナ農家の経済的自立や自然環境保護を促進しています。YWCA および YMCA は100年以上の歴史を持つ国際 NGO で日本にも事務所があり、国連経済社会理事会の諮問資格を持つ社会的信用のある団体です。JAI を通して、被害農家の紹介をいたします。(JAI [olivetree@jai-pal.org](mailto:olivetree@jai-pal.org) Fax: + 970 2 2774540 )

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## [Olive Trees destroyed in Jaba'a](#)

The random destruction of olive groves by the Israeli Occupation Forces in the West Bank continues. Last Tuesday, February 22nd 2011 Izzat Abu latifa, a farmer from Jab'a near Bethlehem was among the latest group of Palestinian farmers to suffer the loss of olive trees destroyed by the Israelis.

Around 7am, the Israelis came to the field adjacent to the Israeli bypass road 367. They started cutting down the trees with chainsaws and then poisoned the roots. When Izzat was told that Israelis were on his land, he hurried to the scene to find nearly 150 olive trees cut down and piled up under the supervision of the military contingent. They told him that the trees were being uprooted because they were planted on Israeli state land. However the field is located just outside of the residential area of Jab'a and it is in the Occupied West Bank and not in Israel. Izzat proved his ownership by showing the Israeli commander his land title.

Izzat told members of the Joint Advocacy Initiative "when I saw them cutting down the trees I felt as if my heart was being uprooted from between my lungs" He added that he had been growing olives on his land for 40 years. "I planted every year as many trees as I could manage and now they come to destroy what I have been working on. Olive trees are holy; what faith, what religion allows this to happen. How does any human being have the heart to kill trees like this"

Izzat was evidently grief-stricken at the loss of the trees which were between 40 and 2 years old and planted by him, his children and grand children. The outrage was made worse by threats from the Israeli commander that if Izzat didn't remove the cut-down trees from the field immediately the Israelis would destroy his remaining trees.

When JAI members attended the scene on Wednesday the trunks and branches were stacked in front of his house in the village with most of the stumps still visible across the terraced fields. It is believed the Israeli actions were motivated in pursuit of the policy to plant pine trees along road corridors and they had been deliberately

negligent in not checking the ownership of the land.

A claim for damages will now be made as well as complaints to the various authorities although Izzat's true loss and the injury he feels can never be made good. He is not a young man, yet despite this he is determined to replant the fields as soon as he can to ensure his link with the land and its olive heritage is maintained.

His spirit is inspirational to JAI members who will endeavour to help him with resources and labour from the international community who support the organization's efforts to protect the olive groves from Israeli settlers and the forces of the occupation.

Unfortunately the losses were not confined to Izzat. The Israelis left his land and went down to destroy another 120 olive trees belonging to Mohammed Ahmed Abu Sbeha who wasn't in the village at the time and came to his field when it was too late. The 120 olive trees were given to Mohammed through the Olive Tree Campaign in its 7th and 8th seasons and were sponsored by people from Japan, Netherlands, Norway, The UK and The USA.

**Note:**

Both Izzat and Mohammed have been part of JAI's Olive Tree Campaign which is called Keep Hope Alive. While Mohammed received olive trees, Izzat became a good example for other farmers because of his lifelong service to his land and his olive trees. Three years ago the Israeli Military came to Izzat's land with the Israeli Water Authority and destroyed part of his land to install water tubes through which Israel could deplete West Bank water for pumping into Israel. Izzat was prevented from having access to the water and was left with the destroyed part of his field which he has since tried to repair. Today he faces a similar act of destruction implemented not for the theft of water but because someone in Israel has decided that pine trees should replace his olive trees on his land!