

Olive trees planting initiative

Concept

An olive branch was sent to Noah bringing him relief that the flood is receding. Synonym of peace around the world, historical olive groves in their native countries of the Middle East, from Palestine to Lebanon, have become as much the victims of aggression as the people of the region. In response to the recent tragedies unfolding in Gaza and neighboring Arab countries, we aim to re-root what the killing machine wants to erase. By planting olive trees, we remember each of the innocent lives lost and we confirm our ancestral attachment to the land, to our culture and to peace.

In response to the recent events in the region, The Environment and Sustainable Development Unit at the American University of Beirut developed the olive tree planting initiative in partnership with The Palestine Land Studies Center and the Advancing Research Enabling Communities (AREC) center, at AUB. The Initiative aims to use and promote olive planting in memory of the fallen victims in Palestine and neighboring countries and in support of the victims and refugees in this region. Two initial activities are planned for the first week of March 2024, under the Palestine Week activities organized by the Palestine Land Studies center:

- First activity: Olive tree planting and dedication at the Urban Oasis, AUB, lower campus.
- Second activity: Planting hundreds of olive trees at a dedicated plot at AREC

The objectives of the olive tree planting is first of all to serve as a memorial of the fallen innocent children of Gaza. In addition, the olive grove that will be planted in AREC will contribute to the sustainability of AREC. Last but not least, the tree planting initiative will help in developing a fundraising campaign in support of the victims of the ongoing conflict.

The initiative has the potential to grow to the national, regional and global scales with the participation of additional potential partners such as the Landscape and Ecosystem Management department at AUB, The Arab group for the Protection of Nature (APN), and the Ghassan Abu Sitta Children's Fund.