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**Your Excellency the Minister of Agriculture of Spain,
Honorable**



**Ministers,
Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,**

It is an honor to address you on behalf of the State of Palestine. Allow me to express our deep appreciation to the Government of Spain for hosting this important session, and to welcome all participating ministers and partners. The olive tree, which unites our countries, is not only an agricultural product but a symbol of heritage, peace, and identity—nowhere more profoundly than in Palestine, where it has stood for thousands of years as a sign of resilience.

Palestine is home to about 550,000 dunums of olive groves, with nearly 13 million olive trees, many among the oldest in the world. This sector sustains around 100,000 families, supports rural industries such as traditional soap production, and plays an essential role in our sustainable development. Yet this heritage is facing an unprecedented assault.

Since October 2023, every olive tree in the Gaza Strip—one million trees—has been destroyed. Alongside this, 17.3% of greenhouses, 8.6% of agricultural wells, extensive croplands, and large portions of livestock have been devastated, pushing Gaza toward famine and creating recovery needs estimated in the billions. In the West Bank, settler attacks, land confiscation, environmental degradation, and obstruction of access to farmland have placed the sector in existential danger.

These attacks are not random; they are ideologically driven. Extremist religious edicts issued by Israeli rabbis—including Rabbi Shlomo Riskin and Rabbi Nissim Muallem—have sanctioned the theft of Palestinian olive harvests, the poisoning of wells, and even promised religious reward for destroying olive trees. These edicts target soldiers and settlers, turning agricultural land into a religious battlefield.

State of Palestine

دولة فلسطين

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Ministry of Agriculture



وزارة الزراعة

Minister's Bureau

ديوان الوزير

The numbers reflect the scale of the crisis. Israeli restrictions prevented Palestinian farmers from reaching 110,000 dunums of olive groves in 2023, and 35,000 dunums in 2024, with tens of thousands more affected in 2025. More than 69,000 olive trees were cut, burned, or uprooted this year, causing losses exceeding 82 million USD. In October 2025 alone, over 158 attacks targeted farmers, volunteers, and observers, involving arson, chemical spraying, harvest theft, well destruction, and access denial. Recent military decrees even formalized the closure of large agricultural areas, criminalizing Palestinian presence on their own lands.

In this context, **the State of Palestine affirms its strong support for the Córdoba Declaration and the principles it contains**, recognizing it as an important step toward protecting the olive sector, advancing sustainability, and strengthening international cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The olive tree is a universal symbol of peace. Protecting the Palestinian olive sector is not only an economic need—it is a cultural, environmental, and moral responsibility. We urge the international community to uphold the rights of Palestinian farmers, ensure their safe access to their lands, and safeguard a heritage that has endured for millennia.

On behalf of the State of Palestine, I express our gratitude for your support and reaffirm our commitment to cooperation, sustainable development, and the preservation of our shared agricultural legacy.

Thank you.