

Dancing as resistance: Iranian women dancing in solidarity with Maedeh Hojabri

by The Region - 10/07/2018 14:13



For several days, dozens of Iranians, men and women, post videos of themselves dancing to show their solidarity with Maedeh Hojabri, the 18-year-old Iranian woman arrested for posting videos on her Instagram account showing her dancing in her room without a veil.

The girl, detained for several weeks, was released after a public apology Tuesday, which she was forced to make, on the Iranian public TV channel IRIB. The young woman confessed to having broken the moral while assuring that this was not her goal and that she simply wanted to reap more followers. According to the New York Times, the girl, who appeared on the television crying, admitted that dancing is a crime. The staging suggests that his "confessions" in public were made upstream under pressure.

Her name is Maeade Mahi. Recently she got arrested just because of uploading her dancing videos on her Instagram. If you are a woman in Iran and you dance or sing or show your hair then you are a criminal. If you want to enjoy your true self, you have to brake the laws every day.

pic.twitter.com/0elq5ld5x6

— Masih Alinejad دیده‌آباد, • (@AlinejadMasih) July 7, 2018

In support of Maedeh Hojabri, women and men posted videos of themselves dancing in public and shared them with the hashtags #Dancingisnotacrime (the hashtag dancing is not a crime) and # منمیدانم برای تو... (I dance for you to dance).

"If you're a woman in Iran and you dance, sing or show your hair, you're a criminal, if you want to be yourself you have to break the laws every day," Alinejad Masih, an Iranian activist, wrote about her. twitter account.

Since March, Maedeh Hojabri had been running an Instagram account on which she posted more than 300 videos of her dancing on Western and Iranian rhythms and pictures of her performances in gymnastics. She appears mostly stripped of the obligatory scarf in Iran. These kinds of "documented" offences, dancing or taking off a hijab in the street, have been gaining momentum for several months, putting the Islamic Republic in the grip of a feminist movement that is gaining sympathy abroad thanks to social networks.

Maedeh Hojabri's publications shared on several accounts in her name totalled between 12,000 and 66,000 followers. The young gymnast was released on bail and her Instagram profiles were reportedly closed by the police.

People in Iran & across the world are posting videos of themselves dancing to stand in solidarity w/ 17 yr old Maedeh Hojabri who was arrested by Iran's security forces for sharing videos of herself dancing at home |

#DancingIsNotACrime # منمیدانم برای تو...

pic.twitter.com/HsMNR2K0fg

— Samira Ghaderi (@Samira_Ghaderi) July 9, 2018

"People in Iran and around the world are posting videos of them in solidarity with

Maedeh," writes Samira Ghaderi on twitter.

Yasamin Alttahir, who works with Amnesty International, posted a video of women dancing on a London street on July 9 in solidarity with Maedeh Hojabri. The video with commentary "Maedeh is one of the Iranians fighting for their human rights" has been seen more than 168,000 times.

We hit the [#London](#) pavement today, dancing in solidarity with [#MaedehHojabri](#) who has been sentenced to prison for dancing. Maedeh is one of so many brave Iranians fighting for their human rights. [#DancingIsNotACrime](#), [#DancingIsNotACrime](#), [#DancingIsNotACrime](#).... Dance with us! [pic.twitter.com/DR2EyaOOt1](#)

— Yasamin Alttahir (@YasaminAlttahir) [July 9, 2018](#)

"When I lived in Iran, my friends and I were filming ourselves dancing, if we were teenagers today, we would have posted our videos on Instagram," wrote Holly Dagnes, an Iran specialist.

When I was a teen living in Iran, my friends and I would film ourselves dancing for fun.

Had we been teenagers today, we would've posted it on Instagram like [#MaedehHojabri](#). [#DancingIsNotACrime](#)

— Holly Dagnes (@hdagnes) [July 10, 2018](#)

The human rights centre in Iran also relayed on its Twitter account videos of Iranians dancing to "show Iran that dancing is not a crime".

Shameful. Iran has aired a FORCED CONFESSION by teenage girl Maedeh Hozhabri, crying and shaking, explaining she posted videos of herself dancing on Instagram for her followers. Social media users are showing their solidarity with [#dancingisnotacrime](#) [pic.twitter.com/cgiPHcVmTI](#)

— IranHumanRights.org (@ICHRI) [July 9, 2018](#)

"You will be laughed at if you tell people all over the world that 17 and 18-year-old girls are arrested for their dance, their happiness and their beauty (and that they have been accused of having) spread indecency, while child rapists and others are

free, "wrote Iranian blogger Hossein Ronaghi-Maleki, according to reports by Reuters.