

YASAMAN ARYANI,

IRAN

# 16-YEAR PRISON TERM FOR **SPEAKING UP** FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS

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# YASAMAN ARYANI

IRAN

A flower generously shared, a headscarf gently removed: two simple gestures that Yasaman Aryani dared to make on a public train in Iran. It was March 8, 2019, International Women's Day, and Yasaman, an actor who loves mountain climbing, took action to peacefully protest an Iranian law that forces women to wear a veil or headscarf (hijab) and loose clothing.

With her mother, Yasaman walked through a women-only train carriage, hair boldly visible as she handed out flowers. She spoke of her hopes for a future when all women would have the freedom to choose what to wear so that one day they could walk together "me without the hijab and you with the hijab". These moments, captured on video, quickly went viral.

On April 10, Iran's authorities arrested Yasaman. They held her alone in a cell for days while interrogators questioned her. They told her to "confess" that foreign elements were behind her activism and to "repent" her actions. If she didn't, they said they would arrest her friends and family. On July 31, Yasaman learned to her shock that she has been sentenced to 16 years in prison. She must serve at least 10 years of her sentence.

Yasaman's cruel punishment is part of a wider crackdown on women campaigning against forced veiling. Since 2018, dozens of women, including Yasaman's mother, Monireh Arabshahi, have been arrested. Everyone has the right to freedom of religion and freedom of expression, including Muslim women to decide whether to wear the hijab or other forms of Islamic dress.

Iranian authorities must not be allowed to persecute Yasaman simply because she believes women should have the right to choose what they wear.

**Call on Iranian authorities to free Yasaman now.**

***Amnesty International firmly opposes all forms of Islamophobia and condemns any and all acts of white supremacist racism and violence against Muslim communities.***



#W4R19

#FreeYasaman

## WRITE TO THE AUTHORITIES TODAY

Describe your concern that Yasaman is being persecuted for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression in order to promote women's rights.

Urge them to release Yasaman Aryani immediately and unconditionally.

**Head of the Judiciary Ebrahim Raisi**  
c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN

Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28  
1209 Geneva, Switzerland

**Twitter:** @khamenei\_ir

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/khamenei\\_ir](http://www.instagram.com/khamenei_ir)

*Salutation: Dear Mr. Raisi*

## SHOW YASAMAN YOU'RE WITH HER

Take a photo or video of yourself taking action like Yasaman did: handing out flowers, or experiencing the sun, wind or rain on your hair. Post these on your social media accounts, tagging them #FreeYasaman with a message to @yasamanaryani95 and Iran's leader @khamenei\_ir. You can also send your photos/videos to [Iran\\_team@amnesty.org](mailto:Iran_team@amnesty.org).

**WRITE A LETTER  
CHANGE A LIFE**