

# Auschwitz survivor angers co-plaintiffs in SS officer trial by saying prosecutions should stop

Eva Mozes Kor, who publicly forgave and embraced former camp guard Oskar Gröning, says stopping the case would help counter neo-Nazi Holocaust deniers in Germany

**Ben Knight in Berlin**

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An Auschwitz survivor who last week forgave a 93-year-old former SS officer on trial in Germany has angered her co-plaintiffs in the case after she appeared on television to say it should not have come to court.

Eva Mozes Kor - who last week publicly forgave and embraced Oskar Gröning - called for the prosecutions of former SS officers to stop as she appeared as part of a panel of historians, journalists and politicians on a Sunday night TV show discussing the purpose of the trial.

In response, Kor's 49 co-plaintiffs released a statement through their lawyers on Monday morning to criticise her statements and her decision to appear as a co-plaintiff in the first place.

"Our clients would not comment here - who better than a survivor of Auschwitz knows that everyone needs to find their own way to overcome their suffering - if Mrs Kor did not repeatedly stage her 'forgiveness' publicly," the statement read.

"The subject of this criminal procedure is NOT that Mr Gröning has done anything personally to Mrs Kor or any of the other co-plaintiffs," it continued. "Whether it is Mrs Kor's place to forgive Mr. Gröning's participation in the murder of her relatives is up to everyone to decide for themselves. But Mrs. Kor says, 'These prosecutions must stop'. Then she should not have become a co-plaintiff."

In court in Lüneburg last Wednesday, Kor, 81, recounted how she and her twin sister Miriam were experimented on by Josef Mengele at Auschwitz. Afterwards, she approached and embraced Gröning, but added, "My forgiveness does not absolve the perpetrator from taking responsibility for his actions. Neither does it diminish my need to know what happened there." She later tweeted about the encounter:

Kor defended the gesture on the TV show Günther Jauch on Sunday night, where she was alone in calling for the prosecutions of former SS officers to stop - and argued instead that any Nazis still alive should come forward to speak publicly about what they did.

She said this would help counter neo-Nazi Holocaust deniers in Germany, a handful of whom had appeared outside the opening of the trial last Tuesday.

Gröning remains one of the only former SS officers to speak publicly about his actions during the Holocaust, giving a long interview to a BBC documentary in 2005.

But Monday's statement from the other plaintiffs makes clear that Kor is isolated among the Auschwitz survivors being represented at the trial.

"We cannot forgive Mr Gröning his participation in the murder of our relatives and another 299,000 people - especially since he feels free from any legal guilt," the statement read. "We want justice and we welcome the resolution that this trial brings."

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