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## Auschwitz survivor Eva Mozes Kor's statement on sentencing of Oskar Groening

I am disappointed in the German court's decision this morning in sentencing Oskar Groening to jail. They found him guilty of being a small cog in a big machine that killed a lot of people, and I agree with that – he was guilty. He has accepted responsibility and admitted his guilt. They are trying to teach a lesson that if you commit such a crime, you will be punished. But I do not think the court has acted properly in sentencing him to four years in jail. It is too late for that kind of sentence. All it does is make the court feel good, like they have done something. His guilt does not decrease just because he is old, but why did they not do this 20 years ago?

My preference would have been to sentence him to community service by speaking out against neo-Nazis. I would like the court to prove to me, a survivor, how four years in jail will benefit anybody. Groening said in his statements that he was wrong, it never should have happened, and it should never happen again. That is exactly what I want him to tell the young people in Germany who want to bring back a Nazi regime. I told Oskar Groening that I have forgiven him, but that does not absolve nor condone what he has done.

Some people, including journalists, have questioned my right to testify in this trial because I have forgiven the Nazis. My forgiveness has nothing to do with the perpetrators. It is for my healing alone. The reason I am speaking out is because so many survivors are still suffering emotionally, 70 years later, and they do not understand they have the power and the right to forgive. The world is hurting so much, and I think it desperately needs something besides punishment.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eva Kor".

Eva Mozes Kor  
Auschwitz Survivor A-7063  
Founding Director, CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center

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