

Parfümerie Douglas GmbH & Co. KG
Dr. Henning Kreke
Chairman of the Board
Luise-Rainer-Straße 7-11
40235 Düsseldorf
Germany

July 07, 2025

Questions Around Corporate Origins and Historical Accountability

Dear Dr. Henning Kreke:

We write to you as independent researchers with deep concern regarding Douglas AG's corporate history and public accountability.

Our recently published report was initially focused on financial and strategic risks. However, the most troubling findings emerged from what had seemed like a minor side task: reviewing Douglas' corporate origins.

Rooted in a 1909 license agreement with the Carstens sisters, Douglas now appears to appropriate nearly a century of prehistory (1821–1909) from an unrelated soap factory. When it comes to the company's own 115-year legacy, however, nearly four decades – spanning the rise and fall of the Nazi regime, the Second World War, and postwar reconstruction – are omitted without explanation.

Independent archival research, along with responses the company has provided to external inquiries, indicate that Douglas is withholding transparency :

- In 1936, the perfumery “Douglas Harders & Co.” was placed under the leadership of a Nazi-approved businessman, Erhard Hunger, under occupational regulation.
- After the war, Mr. Hunger resumed control of the business, despite having been interned as a German POW in Canada.
- The company was rebranded and sold in 1969. No mention is made of how the rightful owners, Catharine Hertha Marie Harders and Alma Lucie Thea Harders, ceased to be proprietors.

The company's own statements leave unanswered how this transfer of control occurred, and whether it took place under duress, coercion, or Aryanization.

Given Douglas AG's status as a publicly listed company, active in 19 countries, and its values-driven positioning, continued silence on this matter is no longer tenable.

We urge the Supervisory Board to take the following steps:

- Commission an independent historical review of Douglas' corporate lineage from 1931 to 1969, with full transparency on ownership and control transitions.
- Publicly disclose all relevant findings, particularly where restitution or moral responsibility may be warranted.
- Clarify whether an investigation of its own wartime and postwar history as well as that of its later-acquired soap factory took place.

We remind you that this is not a marginal concern, but a matter of publicly expected corporate integrity and moral leadership.

Sincerely
HitHawk Research Team