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Fountain Church pastor Celestin Mutabaruka facing genocide charges at Westminster Magistrates Court

Tim Collins

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A church pastor from Ashford is fighting an attempt to extradite him back to Rwanda to face charges of genocide.

Celestin Mutabaruka is one of five men accused by the government of his home country of taking part in the 1994 massacre, in which 800,000 people were killed in 100 days by the government of the day and ethnic militias.

Mr Mutabaruka, who preaches alongside his wife Rose at Ashford's Fountain Church in Willesborough, has been appearing before a lengthy extradition hearing that has been taking place at Westminster Magistrates Court in London.

We previously reported how the Pentecostal minister was arrested at his in Hurst Road in the early hours of May 30 last year.

Allegations made by the Rwandan government have followed Dr Mutabaruka since he and his family fled the country in 1994 following, it is claimed, multiple attempts on his life. A number of legal proceedings have also been instigated previously but none has been successful, say the family.

And they add that he would not receive a fair trial if he is forced to return to Rwanda, fearing for his life.

His wife Rose Mutabaruka, a mother-of-five, previously said of her husband of over 30 years: "What happened to Celestin is completely unjust. It is torturing in the mind. Celestin started a political party founded by Christians to speak peace and to help people to escape the tribalism. I think that is what made him a target. We call upon the government in this country to look at the truth and help Celestin to his freedom."

Speaking at the time of Mr Mutabaruka's arrest, Ashford MP Damian Green said: "Dr Mutabaruka contacted me as his MP when he first came over here, in relation to a number of problems he was facing when he first arrived in this country. "I've not had any contact with him in some time, but it's obviously a very serious accusation that's facing him. Rwanda was the most appalling situation, but neither you nor I can know what went on. The ongoing legal proceedings, which I cannot of course comment on, will have to take their course."

It is unclear how long the extradition hearing will last.