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Rwanda suspect speaks of support

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A RWANDAN prisoner facing genocide charges has told of his feelings from his prison cell as he awaits an extradition hearing. Celestin Ugirashebuja was arrested at his home in Walton on the Naze and is accused of being responsible for thousands of deaths after playing a “key role” in the genocides of 1994.

A RWANDAN prisoner facing genocide charges has told of his feelings from his prison cell as he awaits an extradition hearing.

Celestin Ugirashebuja was arrested at his home in Walton on the Naze and is accused of being responsible for thousands of deaths after playing a “key role” in the genocides of 1994.

The 53-year-old was a well-know member of Frinton Parish Church and has been sent many letters and cards of support.

Ugirashebuja, who denies all charges against him, is being held at the high-security Belmarsh Prison, London as he awaits his latest court hearing.

In a series of letters back to Essex he said the support he has been giving him great strength.

In a letter to the parishioners he wrote: “Every letter and card was followed by tears; but holy tears of joy.

“They were sweet tears dripping down from the eyes to my mouth. They were spontaneously bringing me to praises and thanksgiving to the Lord.

“I continue to thank God for all of you. Thank you very much for your prayers and support in different ways. I know that all of these actions are produced by your love and faith that are inspired in you by God through his son Jesus Christ.”

And in another one to friends who have been supporting him, he said: “May a day come that we will see each other again...”

Mabel Jones, who first knew Ugirashebuja and his family in the 1970s, said she feared he would not get a fair trial should he lose his battle against extradition.

Speaking from her Frinton home, she said: “I have spoken to him twice in prison and to hear his voice he is very positive.

“It is not easy for him, but I think his faith in God is rally helping him and answering our prayers for him.”

She said there had been another day of prayers in Frinton for Ugirashebuja last weekend.

Ugirashebuja is accused of provoking the genocide but Miss Jones said the man he was accused of plotting with had died three years previously.

The City of Westminster Magistrates Court has heard that should Ugirashebuja be extradited, he would not face the death penalty because of a recently signed agreement between the British and Rwandan governments.