

East Africans remain silent on ICC case

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IN ARUSHA

The East African Community remained silent yesterday on President Uhuru Kenyatta's departure to The Hague.

However, analysts said the matter should not be taken lightly.

"Since Kenyatta is a member of an apex body for decision making on crucial matters in the region. His presence and full participation is vital," said business analyst Simon Mapolu when reached for a comment.

He said although the Kenyan leader had gone to The Netherlands in his personal capacity, it would be a fallacy to assume that he had handed over power to his deputy "because such powers have their limitations."

The EAC, he explained, needed him because no crucial decision can be made by the other heads of state in his absence, noting, however, that much would depend on dura-

tion of his required presence in the Dutch capital.

Officials of the Community reached declined to comment officially on the historic summons to a serving Head of State in Africa although scores of them were keenly following the issue on the media.

When Mr Kenyatta appeared to be winning the March 4, 2013, General Election, the same officials admitted that his election would pose "some challenge" to the community because it would be the first time a serving EAC president would go for trial in a global court.

"The EAC's position on this matter is clear and was given last year by the African Union. African countries are against trials of serving Heads of State at the ICC," said a senior official on condition of anonymity.

He told *The Citizen* of Tanzania that Mr Kenyatta, the current chairman of the EAC, had no pending activity at the Arusha headquarters.