

ABSTRACT – PROCEDURAL STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS BEFORE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COURTS

The position of international NGOs within the system of international law or specifically their position before individual international bodies is a topic that the international law theory does not consider very much. Hence, this master's thesis aims to present what role do the international NGOs play in the international arena and particularly places the focus on the procedural roles they may take upon in the European and the Inter-American human rights systems.

The thesis is divided into 3 main parts and several chapters. The first part deals with the history of international NGOs and delimiting the term. Regarding the latter several definitions are presented and assessed and the differences between the international NGOs and transnational corporations are drawn. The thesis then explores the position of international NGOs as subjects of international law and their role in human rights protection which reflects the topics of the thesis.

The second part is devoted to particular roles of international NGOs before the selected courts. The first chapter deconstructs the institute of *amicus curiae* including the way it is embedded into the systems of both courts and the way it is made use of. This chapter also includes few case studies that are supposed to help the reader give an idea about the way the institute is exercised in the context of international NGOs. The second chapter is oriented on the position of international NGOs as representatives of victims before the selected courts and also includes a reflection on the possible use of the institute of *actio popularis*, which is also discussed in the third chapter, which then deals with the role of international NGOs as being the victims themselves. Each of the chapters puts a particular focus on the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights individually.

The core of the third part is then directed at differentiating the position of international and national NGOs and when and whether it is relevant to differentiate between them at all. To serve that purpose, a system where international NGOs enjoy a stronger position is presented and the used literature is reflected upon.

Keywords: International Non-Governmental Organisations, NGOs, European Court of Human Rights, Inter-American Court of Human Rights