

## **Abstract**

*This thesis concentrates on the theme of regional and subregional protection of human rights in Africa. Firstly, it tries to give a summary of the system of human rights protection within the African Union and its evolution with brief characterization of the African Charter on Human and Peoples` Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples` Rights and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. The second chapter concentrates on the protection of human rights under the regional economic communities provided by three subregional courts, namely the ECOWAS Court of Justice, the SADC Tribunal and the East African Court of Justice. It provides an insight into the functioning of these three subregional courts and analyses questions relating to their human rights jurisdiction as well as their human rights practice and different challenges that these courts had and have to face. It concludes that although the effectivity of the regional and subregional human rights protection in Africa is yet not high and has to be improved, the system is still in its beginning and there is a potential for the subregional courts to become more effective forums for human rights protection.*