

## **Abstract**

HIV/AIDS is for many decades one of the major global health issues. It has, therefore, attracted attention of scholars from different fields of study, including security studies. This Master's Thesis seeks to contribute to debates surrounding the issue of securitizing the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The main aim of this thesis is to apply the Copenhagen School's theoretical framework on the case of HIV/AIDS, evaluate the possibility of explaining the international reaction to the pandemic through securitization, and assess whether or not the HIV/AIDS was successfully securitized in South Africa, mainly through effort of the relevant international actors. The case of the Republic of South Africa was chosen because it is one of the worst affected countries by the disease in the world. After discussing the Copenhagen School's securitization theory and its critics, the origins, progression and nature of the disease is explained. The thesis then proceeds with the description and examination of the current state of the epidemic in South Africa as well as the negative influence the segregation and apartheid policy had on the perception of the disease and its spread. The thesis looks at possible securitizing actors of the issue and analysis their discourse in the search for securitizing moves associated with HIV/AIDS. It then discusses the results of these securitizing moves in the context of post-apartheid South Africa.