

This diploma thesis describes the African human rights system on both regional and subregional level and tries to evaluate its effectiveness. An important part of this work is dedicated to judicial and quasijudicial decisions made by respective bodies. The thesis is organised into five main sections.

The first section considers the history of the African continent and its human rights challenges which I believe have influenced the present human rights system. The main focus was brought to the colonial era and the post colonial struggle for independence.

The next section describes the regional system, the aim of which is the protection and promotion human rights across the whole continent. This system is composed of the African Union, 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 operation of these instruments is explained, and the sphere in which these bodies operate in order to influence the promotion and protection of human rights is described.

The following section presents a consideration of similar aspects as the previous, but at the subregional level. At this level, it proved difficult to choose relevant international organizations and to define their relevancy to the topic at hand. I have chosen to focus on the East African Community, the Southern African Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States.

The penultimate section of the thesis deals with the current challenges of the existing system and obstacles encountered that prevent its optimal functioning. It also brings attention to the specific problems experienced in the African environment which relate directly to the protection of human rights.

The last section offers an analysis of the existing decisions made by the most important international judicial and quasi-judicial bodies in Africa. The influence of the Human Rights bodies previously discussed on the best known cases in the area are presented. The major weaknesses of current and previous practice highlighted.

Suggestions are offered for continued and further improvement of the protection of the fundamental rights of the African People.