

**Developing human rights agenda in the East African community: the case of Tanzania
based civil human rights organizations**

Hassan Iddi Mwamwetta

Master of Arts (Development Studies)

University of Dar es Salaam, Institute of Development Studies, 2009

This study investigated the extent to which Human Rights Agenda (HRA) have been developed in the East African Community (EAC) through assessing the Civil Human Rights Organizations (CHROs) in giving a room participate in the East African Community. The study findings revealed that, member states had not given a priority on HRA and the participation of CHROs was very minimal and not sustainable as the structure of the EAC does not provide a defined room for CHROs to play their roles. As a result there was very little involvement in human rights monitoring and protection. Specifically, the study examined the following questions; why the structure of the EAC does not provide specific defined role for CHROs to play? How do CHROs participate in the EAC? To what extent does the formulation and implementation of EAC policies and programs take on board the agenda from CHROs? Are there strategies used by CHROs to ensure that their participation in the EAC is sustainable and visible? The research findings have shown that, despite the commitment among member states to create a people centered and people driven community which pays special attention on human rights and good governance, it has been reduced to mere blueprint without practical execution. Low observance and protection of human rights and weak participation of CHROs into the EAC matters are still the major challenges towards a sustainable integration. There is a need of political commitment and willingness among member states to regard human rights as an important agenda to enabling environment for CHROs to participate so as to have a sustainable community.