

## **ABSTRACT**

Human rights are difficult to define. Generally speaking, they are regarded as those fundamental and inalienable rights which are essential for life as a human being. Due to the recognition that human rights are of international concern, many conventions and other instruments have been put in place to defend these rights. The signing of the United Nations Charter marked the formal realization that human rights are of international concern. The signing and ratifying of other conventions dealing with human rights is also a sign that human rights are not limited to national boundaries. Human rights violations in South Sudan were very common during the conflict between the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A. The war was characterized by mass killings, bombing of the civilians, torturing of the prisoners, denial of access to humanitarian aid, abduction of women and children, slavery, denial of access to health care and other basic needs such as education, and other different forms of atrocities. Despite the existence of the international law of human rights and its enforcement mechanisms, there is still a problem in the ensuring that human rights are respected by parties to a conflict. It is against this background that this study sought to find out the effectiveness of the international human rights standards and the international law on human rights in protecting civilians during armed conflicts. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the international human rights instruments in the protection of civilians during violent conflicts, paying attention to South Sudan. It also sought to investigate the extent to which the international community can intervene to ensure that the international human rights standards are upheld and respected during moments of war.