



European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation

**Master's Thesis**

**Extraterritorial Human Rights Obligations of the  
European Union in the Context of the Economic  
Partnership Agreements with the ACP states**

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## **Abstract**

*This thesis examines the extraterritorial human rights obligations of the EU in the context of the Economic Partnership Agreements with the ACP states. It clarifies that these agreements engender substantial negative effects on the protection of economic, social and cultural rights of individuals in ACP states. The relevant obligations to respect and to protect are then set out. For the negative effects to constitute breaches of human rights obligations by the EU, they need to have an extraterritorial effect and must be incumbent on the EU.*

*It is thus demonstrated that there is a solid basis in international law for the existence of extraterritorial obligations, and that such obligations are also incumbent on the EU, both through the international legal order and through the European legal order. Relying on these findings, several political and judicial ways are finally set out to hold the EU accountable for the violations of its extraterritorial human rights obligations.*

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## **List of abbreviations**

ACP States – African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States

AfT – Aid for Trade initiative

CARIFORUM – Caribbean Forum of ACP States

CESCR – Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

EAC – East African Community

EC – European Communities

ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights

ECJ – European Court of Justice

ECtHR – European Court of Human Rights

EEC – European Economic Community

EPAs – Economic Partnership Agreements

ESA – Eastern and Southern Africa States

EU – European Union

GC – General Comment

IACHR – Inter-American Court of Human Rights

ICCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICJ – International Court of Justice

OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights

OP-ICESCR – Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

SADC – Southern African Development Community

UN – United Nations

UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

WTO – World Trade Organisation



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