

Abstract

This thesis is aimed at analysing the Six-Party Talks and why they failed to generate a viable solution to the North Korean nuclear weapons programme. Employing theoretical approaches of negotiation analysis, this analysis is conducted under the presumption that a zone of possible agreement did not exist due to the involved parties' irreconcilable positions. Two hypotheses addressing factors that are exogenous to the negotiations such as the parties' underlying interests and North Korean domestic politics are explored so as to find an explanation for the negotiators' pursuits within the Six-Party Talks. The findings reveal that on the one hand, North Korea can hardly dissociate from its nuclear weapons programme due to the gains in international leverage and for ideological reasons. On the other hand, the other five parties are each concerned with their own priorities revolving around the Korean Peninsula. These underlying interests are related to enhancement and maintenance of influence in the region, Korean unification, economic expansion or solving other bilateral issues with the DPRK. Thus, cooperation, commitment and common agreement in the multilateral setting of the Six-Party Talks is severely limited.