

## India calls for stronger treaties to protect space assets

Fine example: The SAARC satellite being launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. PTI

Stressing international cooperation in space as in all domains of global commons, Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar on Tuesday called for strengthening global treaties to protect space-based assets and prevent militarisation of outer space.

“International cooperation is critical in the space domain as in other global commons. Our approach therefore goes beyond national considerations. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to state that international cooperation is today hard-wired into India’s space programme,” Dr. Jaishankar said addressing a conference on the space programme jointly organised by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

### Over 200 treaties

In line with this, Dr. Jaishankar said India had more than 200 international cooperation agreements with more than 40 countries and international organisations, and called the maiden moon mission, Chandrayaan-I, a “successful example of international cooperation with international payloads”.

“The South Asia satellite is a matter of particular pride as it literally raises the heights to which we had taken our ‘neighbourhood first’ policy,” the Foreign Secretary said.

In May, ISRO launched the communications satellite GSAT-9, also called SAARC satellite, meant to provide connectivity and disaster support to countries in South Asia.

The satellite cost around Rs. 235 crore and had a life span of 12 years.

Saying India is party to all the legally binding instruments on outer space, Dr. Jaishankar said, “India has also noted with concern the growing diverse threats in this frontier and is sensitive to these challenges.”

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