# EIFL ANNUAL REPORT 2017

# Case Study Kyrgyzstan

## CASE STUDY - DASTAN BEKESHEV


*Member of Parliament, Kyrgyzstan*

Dastan Bekeshev, the first blind person to be elected to parliament in Kyrgyzstan, worked tirelessly for accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Marrakesh Treaty.

The Marrakesh Treaty makes it possible to convert printed works into accessible formats like braille and audio, and to share them across borders.

“The Treaty will make a huge difference to blind and visually impaired people in Kyrgyzstan. It will increase our access to knowledge and open opportunities for education and employment,” said MP Bekeshev.

EIFL supported a Marrakesh Treaty advocacy campaign in Kyrgyzstan, which drew in many organizations and individuals: the Kyrgyzstan Library Information Consortium, led by Sania Battalova, blind and visually impaired people, policy makers, copyright lawyers and other MPs. “We all stood together. I personally phoned every Government minister asking them to sign the draft law on accession to the Treaty,” said MP Bekeshev.

On 15 May 2017, the Government deposited its instrument of accession at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and on 15 August 2017 the Treaty entered into force in Kyrgyzstan. “We did it! We were the first country in central Asia to accede to the Marrakesh Treaty,” said MP Bekeshev of this proud moment.

Quote from MP Dastan Bekeshev:
*“Now libraries can produce Braille or audio books without being afraid of infringing copyright laws.*