



## PREAMBLE\*

Having, by virtue of the glories of Our Ancestors, ascended the Throne of a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal; desiring to promote the welfare of, and to give development to the moral and intellectual faculties of Our beloved subjects, the very same that have been favoured with the benevolent care and affectionate vigilance of Our Ancestors; and hoping to maintain the prosperity of the State, in concert with Our people and with their support, We hereby promulgate, in pursuance of Our Imperial Rescript of the 12th day of the 10th month of the 14th year of Meiji, a fundamental law of State, to exhibit the principles, by which We are to be guided in Our conduct, and to point out to what Our descendants and Our subjects and their descendants are forever to conform.

\* This Preamble is not found in the original Japanese text of the Commentaries, but we have deemed it desirable to insert it here for the convenience of our readers. (*Translator's note.*)

The rights of sovereignty of the State, We have inherited from Our Ancestors, and We shall bequeath them to Our descendants. Neither We nor they shall in future fail to wield them, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution hereby granted.

We now declare to respect and protect the security of the rights and of the property of Our people, and to secure to them the complete enjoyment of the same, within the extent of the provisions of the present Constitution and of the law.

The Imperial Diet shall first be convoked for the 23rd year of Meiji, and the time of its opening shall be the date, when the present Constitution comes into force.

When in the future it may become necessary to amend any of the provisions of the present Constitution, We or Our successors shall assume the initiative right, and submit a project for the same to the Imperial Diet. The Imperial Diet shall pass its vote upon it, according to the conditions imposed by the present Constitution, and in no otherwise shall Our descendants or Our subjects be permitted to attempt any alteration thereof.

Our Ministers of State, on Our behalf, shall be held responsible for the carrying out of the present Constitution, and Our present and future subjects shall forever assume the duty of allegiance to the present Constitution.

[His Imperial Majesty's Sign-Manual.]

[Privy Seal.]

*The 11th day of the 2nd month of  
the 22nd year of Meiji.*

- (Countersigned) Count Kuroda Kiyotaka,  
*Minister President of State.*
- Count Ito Hirobumi,  
*President of the Privy Council.*
- Count Okuma Shigenobu,  
*Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.*
- Count Saigo Tsukumichi,  
*Minister of State for the Navy.*
- Count Inouye Kaoru,  
*Minister of State for Agriculture  
and Commerce.*
- Count Yamada Akiyoshi,  
*Minister of State for Justice.*
- Count Matsugata Masayoshi,  
*Minister of State for Finance,  
and Minister of State for  
Home Affairs.*
- Count Oyama Iwao,  
*Minister of State for War.*
- Viscount Mori Arinori,  
*Minister of State for Education.*
- Viscount Enomoto Takeaki,  
*Minister of State for Communications.*

