BRUSSELS — Leaders of 48 Asian and European countries urged the military junta of Burma to release political prisoners before general elections next month.

The leaders attending the biannual Asian-European Union summit, or ASEM, said they "touched upon the issue" of Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader who has been under house arrest for 15 of the last 21 years, but did not specifically call for her freedom

But a statement concluding the two-day conference said the release of detainees would help the elections be "more inclusive, participatory and transparent."

The position was included in a "Chair's Statement," which meant it did not require consensus or Burma's agreement.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy was declared illegal after it failed to register by last May to take part in the election, scheduled for Nov. 7. The NLD is boycotting the vote, which it considers undemocratic. Suu Kyi filed a suit earlier Tuesday with Burma's High Court to declare that the NLD remains a legal party.

Suu Kyi's latest term of 18 months' house arrest is due to expire on Nov. 13, but it was unclear if her detention would be extended by the junta chief, Snr-Gen Than Shwe.

The ASEM statement urged the government to talk with all parties in a process of national reconciliation, saying a free and fair election would be a step toward "a legitimate, constitutional, civilian system of government."