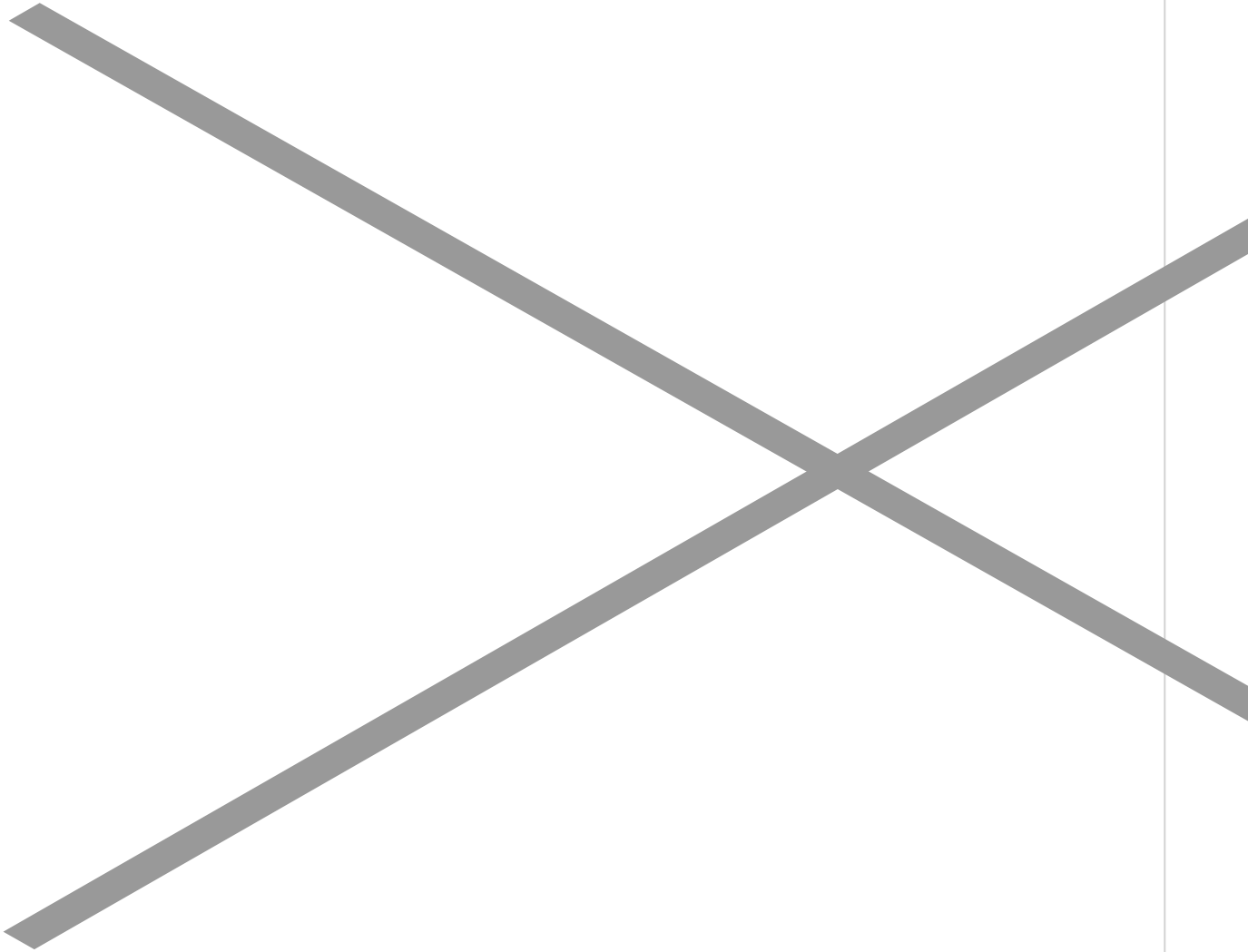


Intellectuals call on Brazilian president to grant asylum to Julian Assange

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Lula described as "a shame that a journalist who unveiled the traps of a State against others is condemned to die in jail and that nobody does anything for his freedom". | Photo: EFE

Brasilia, June 29 (RHC)-- A group of Brazilian scientists, journalists, professors, former ministers and trade unionists are calling on President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva asking Brazil to grant political asylum to Australian Julian Assange.

This was reported by journalist Mônica Bergamo in the newspaper Folha de S.Paulo and refers to a document signed by 2,897 people. The signatories cite the different occasions on which the progressive leader has come out in defense of the journalist, whom he has described as "a prisoner for denouncing the traps of a State", and of freedom of the press.

According to the authors of the letter to Lula, in case the UK justice system confirms its decision to extradite him to the United States, the founder of WikiLeaks could be sentenced to 175 years in prison for having "revealed true facts about the United States".

Among the signatories are photographer Sebastião Salgado, journalist Juca Kfourri, Fiocruz researchers Renato Cordeiro and Alvaro Nascimento, former ministers José Gomes Temporão (Health), Sérgio Machado Rezende (Science and Technology) and Ana de Hollanda (Culture), federal deputy Jandira Feghali.

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