



DHL Express Transports Soil from Around the World to U.S. as Part of Large Scale Art Project

- **“Common Ground 191” Unveiled today in Southern California**
- **Large Fresco Creation is Artist’s Expression of Global Unity**

PLANTATION, Fla. – October 28, 2009 – In 2001, artist Gary Simpson envisioned a way to transcend national boundaries through natural artistic expression, collecting soil samples from each of the United Nations member states as the basis of his artwork. Approximately 190 samples later and through the help of DHL Express, the world’s leading express delivery and logistics company, *Common Ground 191™* culminates eight painstaking years of work by Simpson to create a metaphor about the world and the interaction of mankind.

Now on display at John Wayne Airport in Orange County, California, is a glimpse into the background work leading up to the final project – 14 panels with soil from 38 of the countries, flags from the countries, as well as jars and shipping boxes used by Simpson for importing the soil via DHL Express from 190 countries.

Soil samples for *Common Ground 191* were collected at such historic sites as the ancient Mayan ruins of Chichen Itza, Robben Island in South Africa where Nelson Mandela was jailed for nearly 20 years, and Saddam Hussein’s former palace in Iraq.

DHL Express international shipping services were critical to the soil sample collection process. Simpson shipped a box within a box to each country, enclosing a return airwaybill and documentation for delivery back to the U.S. He worked closely with U.S. embassies and other contacts in-country to enable the soil collection process.

“DHL was the perfect partner to help complete the vision of my global earth art project as they are the only express carrier with the local experience and knowledge in each United Nations country,” said artist Gary Simpson. “I appreciate DHL’s role in helping bring this massive and complex undertaking to fruition through their expertise in international cross-border shipping.”



“We’re proud to have been able to utilize our worldwide talents and far-reaching global network to help Gary Simpson complete his artistic vision,” said Mike Parra, Senior Vice President/General Manager - Western USA, DHL Express. “As the specialists in international shipping and given our extensive global network, DHL was really the perfect partner for this initiative.”

The collection boxes for the soil samples have traveled, all combined, over 2,500,000 miles for this effort. Each returned soil sample collected and forwarded to Simpson underwent careful regulatory review, including Customs review. Furthermore, at DHL’s international Gateway at LAX, each soil sample was processed and sterilized by the USDA to remove all organic material.

To complete the project – a large 50-by-50 foot fresco rendering is in progress – Simpson will need samples from two additional countries which he will combine with soil from each other nation in the project, and mix with concrete and colored pigment to create 196, 42"x 42" fresco panels.

The display of *Common Ground 191* progress to date can be viewed at John Wayne Airport, in Terminal A across from Gates 11 – 14, through February 22, 2010. More information on *Common Ground 191* can be obtained online at www.commonground191.com.

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