

Do you think that you have been trained enough to be sent to a country where the conflict is so dangerous ?

Yes, especially as we have had one year of complete training just for the Afghanistan mission. And France has never done so many efforts allow us to train whether it is on a material or a financial level.

Once you arrived there, what was your first impression ?

My first impression was the impression that this country wasn't plagued by war, of course we saw the destitution but the country isn't marked by war just by poverty. At the beginning, my thought was that maybe this country will be devastated as Yugoslavia but it wasn't. So my feeling was that this mission will be difficult because we clearly saw that the Talibans are active members of the population and finding their hideout would be like playing cat and mouse with them.

What did you feel regarding the distance between your family and you ?

At the beginning of each mission we didn't pay attention to the distance because it was part of our routine. I felt their absence even more after three months because that's when the routine settled. When the routine is here, waiting isn't easy.

What was your daily life like there ?

We woke up at three or four o'clock in the morning, we patrolled until late in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon and in some cases in the evening too. When we weren't patrolling we had some time to relax when we wrote letters to our family or we went on internet to speak with our relatives. We took advantage of our free time to communicate with our families because the communication in Afghanistan is complicated. But during own free times we continued to train on the field.

Were you mixed with foreign military forces ?

Yes, we worked with international forces present on the premises as Americans but also with Afghans and their police. The Americans brought a very precious help which has allowed us to do a good job.

Was there a real solidarity between the soldiers or a sort of « every man for himself » ?

There was real solidarity, we worked for the Americans and they worked for us in return. It's the same for the Afghans.