

ABC's *Good Morning America*

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7:01:08 a.m. [TEASE]

13 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; Surprise Announcement]

ROBIN ROBERTS: Breaking overnight, the surprise announcement from New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Arden, who gained global recognition for her response to the pandemic, revealing she is stepping down. Her statement and what's next.

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7:14:28 a.m.

2 minutes and 12 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; New Zealand Leader Stepping Down; Jacinda Ardern: "I No Longer Have Enough in the Tank"]

ROBERTS: Now to the surprise from New Zealand's prime minister, Jacinda Arden, announcing at a news conference she's stepping down next month. Arden rose to global stardom for her leadership when the pandemic hit. Rhiannon Ally has more for us. Good morning, Rhiannon.

RHIANNON ALLY: Good morning. This was really a surprise. Prime Minister Arden was fighting back tears when she announced she will not seek re-election, sending shock waves through her country of five million people and also the world, who got to know her through her empathetic leadership.

NEW ZEALAND PM JACINDA ARDERN: I know what this job takes and I know that I no longer have enough in the tank to do it justice.

ALLY: This morning, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Arden preparing to step down.

ARDERN: This summer, I had hoped to find a way to prepare not just for another year, but another term because that is what this year requires. I have not been able to do that. And so, today I'm announcing that I will not be seeking re-election.

ALLY: Arden gained global recognition in 2017, becoming New Zealand's third female leader at the age of 37 and one of the youngest in the world. She guided New Zealand as they mourned the 51 people killed in the Christchurch terror attack in 2019. Arden successfully passing gun control measures after the massacre.

ARDERN [in 2019]: Now is the time for change.

ALLY: She led her country through the COVID-19 pandemic, earning praise on the world stage

for her initial strategy for curbing the spread. Arden saying she doesn't know exactly what her future holds, but, for now, she's looking forward to spending more time with her family.

ARDERN: To Neve, mum is looking forward to being there when you start school and to Clark, let's finally get married.

ALLY: She calls it a fulfilling five and a half years, but it wasn't without her controversies. Many criticized her COVID policies. Her term will end by February 7, but it's still unclear who will take over until the general election for a new prime minister in October. Guys, she says it's time for a fresh start with a new leader.

ROBERTS: Oh, my goodness. It was so surprising to get that news overnight. Rhiannon, thanks so much.