



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on January 20, 2023

New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern to Resign Amid Dwindling Support

SINGAPORE — New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern made a surprise announcement on Thursday that she had “no more in the tank” to continue leading the country, and would resign by early February at the latest and not seek reelection.

The left-leaning Ardern, restraining tears, admitted that it had been a challenging five and a half years as prime minister, and that she was only human and needed to step down.

“This summer, I had hoped to find a way to prepare for not just another year, but another term — because that is what this year requires. I have not been able to do that,” Ardern, 42, stated at a news conference in Napier where her Labour Party was conducting a caucus meeting.

“I know there will be much discussion in the aftermath of this decision as to what the so-called ‘real’ reason was.... The only interesting angle you will find is that after going on six years of some big challenges, that I am human,” she continued. “Politicians are human. We give all that we can, for as long as we can, and then it’s time. And for me, it’s time.”

Ardern claimed the top job had taken a toll on her. She said she was not stepping down because the job was tough, but because she believed others could do a better job.

While recent polls appeared to indicate that a center-right coalition will likely win the election, Ardern pointed out that was not the reason for her resignation.

“I am not leaving because I believe we cannot win the next election, but because I believe we can and will,” she said.

“I am leaving because with such a privileged job comes a big responsibility. The responsibility to know when you are the right person to lead — and also when you’re not.”

Besides, Ardern said she told her daughter, Neve, that she was eagerly anticipating being there when she started school this year and informed her long-time partner Clarke Gayford that it was time they married.

Ardern was the second prime minister in the world to give birth while in office, after Pakistan’s Benazir Bhutto in 1990.

Ardern elaborated that she had not made any particular plans for the future besides spending more time with her family.



AP Images
Jacinda Ardern



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“I have given my absolute all to being Prime Minister but it has also taken a lot out of me,” she said. “You cannot and should not do the job unless you have a full tank, plus a bit in reserve for those unplanned and unexpected challenges that inevitably come along.”

A Labour Party vote for a new leader is poised to happen this Sunday. The party leader will be prime minister until the next general election. Ardern’s term as leader is expected to end no later than February 7, while a general election will be held on October 14.

When asked about her party’s election prospects, Ardern said she believed Labour would win the upcoming election. She indicated that she will remain a member of Parliament until April to avoid a by-election.

Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson, who also serves as finance minister, said in a statement he had no plans to be the next Labour leader.

Political commentator Ben Thomas remarked that Ardern’s revelation was a huge shock, as polls seemed to indicate she is the country’s preferred prime minister, although her approval has plummeted since the 2020 election.

In 2017, Ardern’s initial election featured prominently on the global stage due to her gender and youth, giving rise to the phrase “Jacinda-mania”.

Ardern became the world’s youngest female head of government when she was elected prime minister at age 37.

She grew up in the North Island hinterland, where her father was a police officer. Ardern attributed her beliefs to the poverty she saw there.

Raised as a Mormon, Ardern left the religion in her 20s owing to its stance against homosexuality.

Notably, she was also a graduate of the World Economic Forum (WEF) leader Klaus Schwab’s Young Global Leaders School, which counts some of the world’s most prominent authoritarian leaders and left-wing business leaders among its alumni.

Ardern’s response to the 2019 massacre of 51 people in Christchurch by a gunman reflecting anti-immigrant hatred sealed her image as a progressive and liberal icon.

“We represent diversity, kindness, and compassion. A home for those who share our values. Refuge for those who need it,” she said at the time.

However, over the past year, Ardern’s government has been steadily nose diving in the polls as the country has witnessed an escalating cost of living and a bleak economic outlook. There have also been some highly publicized instances of violent crime that affected her popularity.

To make matters worse, the New Zealand central bank is predicting a recession this year as it hikes interest rates at record pace to maintain control of inflation. The rise in interest rates gave rise to a 12-percent plunge in house prices.

Additionally, Ardern has been the target of widespread criticism both in New Zealand and abroad for her enforcement of draconian Covid policies throughout the past two and a half years.

In 2020, speaking prior to the Covid lockdowns that began in March, Ardern addressed New Zealanders, stating that her government is “your single source of truth,” leading many to portray her as “Orwellian” and dictatorial.



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In August 2021, Ardern called for an entire nationwide lockdown over a single Covid-19 case, prompting naysayers to lambast her approach to coronavirus as “dystopian” and a “never-ending nightmare.”

Subsequently, after the enforcement of a nationwide vaccine passport system, Ardern proudly declared that she was creating “two different classes of people” in New Zealand — the vaccinated and the unvaccinated.

Apart from Covid-19 issues, Ardern has been a staunch advocate of a range of left-wing causes, including “climate change” activism, abortion, gun control, and online censorship. Moreover, her government’s environmental protection laws were faced with massive opposition from farmers across the country. Recently, she was caught on microphone calling an opposition politician an “arrogant pr*ck”.

ACT Party leader David Seymour said in a January 19 statement that although he wished Ardern well, the country needed a new leader to lift it out from economic woes, among other problems.

I’ve known Jacinda for over a decade and while we rarely see eye to eye on political matters, we have remained collegial and have been able to team up for a good cause when the opportunity arose. She won a landslide second term in 2020, but her popularity has been on the slide as she battles declining trust in the government, a deteriorating economic situation and a resurgent conservative opposition.”

Jacinda is a well-meaning person, but her idealism collided hard with reality. Unfortunately, this has left the country with big problems: the economy, the lawlessness, the Treaty.

New Zealand needs a new government of real change, and ACT will be providing the ideas and the backbone to make the change real.

During the 2020 U.S. presidential election campaign, various Democratic candidates praised the socialist Ardern as a role model. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg even stated in 2019 that Ardern’s leadership was “masterful.” Outsider candidate Marianne Williamson also pledged that Ardern would be the first world leader she would call if elected.

“Girl, you are so on,” Williamson gushed.

Furthermore, Ardern, epitomizing her left-leaning dictatorial tendencies, made gun confiscation and “climate change” her priorities, criminalizing a wide variety of firearms in 2019 after the Christchurch mosque shootings.

“This is just the beginning of the work we need to do,” Ardern stated in March 2019 following the shooting, declaring a ban on semiautomatic firearms. Ardern backed the ban with an all-out “buyback” scheme to persuade New Zealanders to give up the weapons for cash.

“Under [Ardern’s] leadership, New Zealand has banned assault rifles and military-style semi-automatic weapons just six days after the Christchurch mosque attacks,” two-time failed U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton waxed lyrical that year. “Public servants didn’t stop at offering thoughts and prayers. They chose to act.”

During Covid-19, Ardern imposed wide-ranging lockdowns that immobilized New Zealand’s cities for nearly two years and brought the nation’s economy to its knees. Just like her Chinese ally Xi Jinping,



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Ardern's strict Covid-19 lockdown policies were imposed with little notice beforehand.

A high-profile U.S. Congress hearing [was](#) told "one of the major fundraisers for Jacinda Ardern's party" is linked to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and it showed China had infiltrated New Zealand's political echelons.

In a further outrage to New Zealanders, Ardern's creation of the Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) system on the pretext of curbing the spread of Covid-19 effectively banned all people, including citizens, from entering the country outside of the MIQ system. Subsequently, only citizens who took the Covid-19 shots qualified for MIQ.

Later, the High Court of Wellington declared that MIQ was a violation of citizens' rights.

"The combination of the virtual lobby and the narrow emergency criteria operated in a way that meant New Zealanders' right to enter their country could be infringed in some instances in a manner that was not demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society," Justice Jillian Mallon wrote.

Seemingly inspired by the trucker "Freedom Convoy" protests in Canada, New Zealand truckers surrounded Wellington in February last year to protest against Ardern's strict authoritarianism. Yet Ardern did not meet with them, on the ground that she was "too busy."

"It's about time. She's wrecked the economy and food prices have skyrocketed," said Esther Hedges from Cambridge on New Zealand's north island.

"I'm not happy with her and I don't know anyone who is," the 65-year-old added.



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