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New Zealand confirms first death from COVID-19

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MELBOURNE

New Zealand confirmed “devastating news” Sunday of its first death from to novel coronavirus.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said a woman, 70, initially diagnosed with influenza, later tested positive for the virus known as COVID-19.

“Today’s death is a reminder of the fight that we have on our hands,” said Ardern. “Stay at home. Break the chain and save lives.”

There are 524 cases of the virus in New Zealand as of Sunday but 56 patients have recovered.

The country declared a state of emergency March 25 to curb the spread of the novel virus.

U.S.-based Johns Hopkins University data shows worldwide infections nearing the 665,000 mark with almost 30,000 deaths. Greater than 140,000 have recovered from infections.

After first appearing in Wuhan, China in December, the virus has

spread to 177 countries and regions.

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